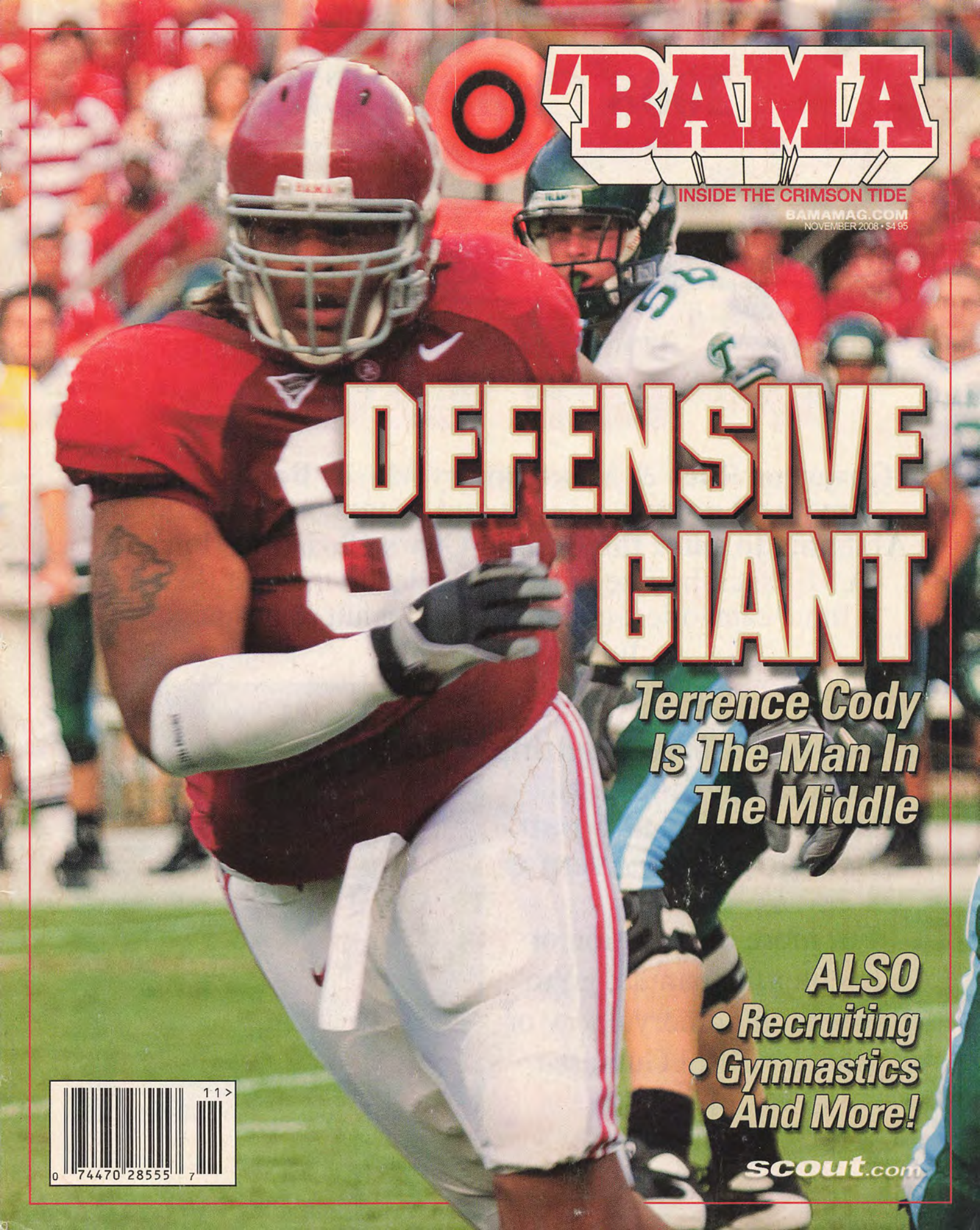

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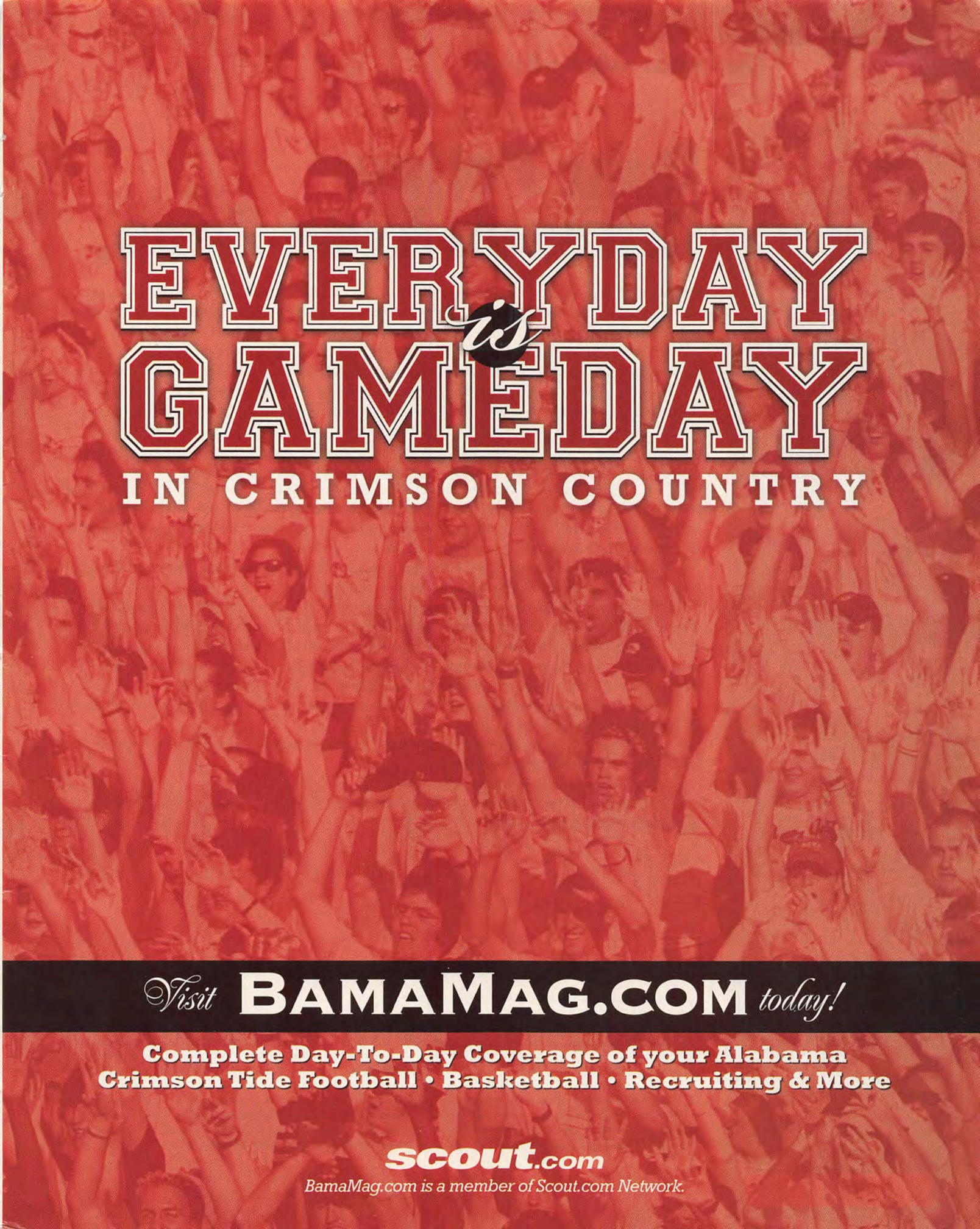
Cover photo of Terrence Cody by Stuart McNair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Letter from the Editor

Dear Fellow Crimson Tide Fans,

There are three head football coaches in the Southeastern Conference who have previously been head men in the National Football League. All of them went to pro football from the college ranks and all returned to college.

It doesn't surprise me that a football coach would prefer the college game to pro ball. And I have known some very, very fine football coaches who wouldn't dream of not coaching at the high school level.

Years ago I knew a man who had been a head coach in the NFL and had become a college head coach. In a casual conversation with me he said, "If it wasn't for gambling, there wouldn't be pro football." He was preaching to the choir. I don't watch much pro football. I know they have the very best players. And on the whole, NFL coaching is as good as it gets. But for the most part, it bores me.

I like the diversity of the college game. I hear about how pro teams run different offensive and defensive schemes, but they all look pretty much the same to me. It's not like watching a different type of offense nearly every week. Will a pro team have the imagination to use Tim Tebow the way Florida does? The wishbone offense is all but dead because it's hard to recruit good football players who want to play pro ball when you're running an offense no pro team would use.

In college you get the spread, the I, the West Coast, and dozens of variations. Alabama's defense is listed as a 3-4, but Bama can have a half dozen or more alignments.

College players choose a school and almost always stick with it. Pro players are chosen and will change allegiances as the drop of a million or two. The draft seems to excite pro football fans, but not like recruiting captures the attention of college football followers. That may be because a pro team keeps the bulk of its players for many years. In any one year a college team may count on several freshmen to start and a dozen or more to play. For instance, this year's Alabama team.

I like college football crowds, particularly the young people. I like having a band and cheerleaders who are classmates of the players.

I like going to a road games and seeing RVs and cars with Alabama identification and knowing there will be thousands of Tide fans in the stands.

I like the homecoming parade and bowl games.

And I understand that I probably like all of this a lot more because it has been my good fortune to be involved with Alabama football.

Sincerely,
Kirk McNair
Editor

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On The Right

Marlon Davis, Drew Davis deserve credit

The left side of Alabama's offensive line deservedly gets accolades. Left tackle Andre Smith is a pre-season All-America who won the Jacobs Award as the best blocker in the Southeastern Conference last year as a sophomore. Left guard Mike Johnson is a veteran who is versatile enough to play four positions.

But the effectiveness of the men to the right side of all-star center Antoine Caldwell should not be underestimated. Indeed, Caldwell has a great appreciation for the work done by right guard Marlon Davis and right tackle Drew Davis.

"Those guys on the right side, Marlon and Drew, it's amazing how hard they've worked, beginning in the off-season," Caldwell said. "They went over and over their drills and they are on the same page. We are light years ahead of where we were because of the work they started last year after the season, and it has carried over. It is a credit to them."

That point became evident early on during the Tide's opening game 34-10 domination of the Clemson Tigers, a team picked by many to win the ACC championship. Time after time, Offensive Coordinator Jim McElwain's play calls led to runs by Tide backs Glen Coffee and Mark Ingram behind not just Smith and Johnson, but also the right side manned by the Davises.

Perhaps McElwain noticed the bond that had developed between the pair. Marlon Davis has noticed. "Drew and I have a pretty good relationship now," said Marlon Davis. "We watch film together every night, and try our best to get better every day. We even sit down sometime, and go over the plays and make sure we're on one page, because that's very important.

"That's basically what we do. We know each other very well, and we know the (line) calls, and help each other out on the right side."

Drew Davis describes working and bonding with veteran Marlon Davis on the right side of the Alabama offensive line. "Marlon and I have started together since the spring," Drew said. "He's meant a lot to me. He has very good technique. He's very technical. He always takes the right steps and carries out his assignments. He's really good. We have good communications."

Johnson says the two Davises have become a good pair. "I think they've worked great together," said Johnson, who was at right tackle much of last season. "They've been together since the spring, and they're the only two players who have actually started next to each other the whole time. Marlon's brought Drew along,

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Marlon Davis is experienced right guard

Stuart McNair

and he's probably the reason why Drew's starting this year."

Marlon Davis has been a starter the better part of three seasons. "I just let Drew know its fun out there," he said. "You have to concentrate on what you're doing, but at the same time, you have to have fun. I tell him, 'Man, have fun. We're going to talk to each other. We're going to do this. If there's anything you don't know, just ask me. We'll work together from there. We'll talk to each other, and help each other.'"

Senior quarterback John Parker Wilson, like many of his teammates, considers Drew Davis to be one of the team's most improved players. Wilson said the veteran Marlon Davis has been good for the less experienced Drew. Wilson said, "Marlon's' had some playing time. He started last year, but Drew is a new guy. They've worked together very well, 'teamworking up,' and making calls. I think the right side has been really solid. They're two strong guys that know what to do. Marlon's got tremendous strength, and Drew's just very knowledgeable. I think they've done a really good job."

Drew Davis is now 6-foot-7, 305 pounds. The Evergreen native has added 25-plus pounds of muscle since the end of the 2007 season. How much work did that take? "A lot," he smiled. "Since Coach Scott Cochran's been here, we've done a lot more strength-building stuff. We focus a lot on legs.

"I knew if I kept working, it would come my time, and I'd just take advantage of the opportunity."

Drew Davis, a redshirt junior, had played sparingly before earning a starting role in spring practice.

Marlon Davis, a 6-foot-2, 300-pounder from Columbus, Georgia, noticed the change, because he was pushing the weights, running the 110-yard sprints, and going through agility drills in 100-degree heat all summer alongside Drew Davis. "You have to push through it and be mentally tough," he said.

When Marlon Davis was sidelined for the better part of two games (Tulane and Western Kentucky), in stepped his backup, David Ross. Drew said, "I work good with David Ross, too. All the offensive linemen, we kind of mesh together. We all communicate. I trust anybody they put beside me, whoever. Ross doesn't really need that much help on assignments. When he comes in, there's not much drop-off."

Caldwell agrees. "Marlon is a tough guy and it helps out

continuity when he's in there," he said, "but when he was out, I had a lot confidence in David Ross. Ross did a great job. He's one of the smartest guys on the offensive line. He helps me out with the calls."

Marlon Davis made it back for the Arkansas game, missing the better part of two contests. That's pretty quick for a guy who pulled a hamstring when he did an unintentional split on an extra point early in the Tulane game, after being hit by a Green Wave player. He didn't want to miss any more time than he had to in his senior season.

"Any time you get injured, you want to come back," said Marlon Davis. "You've got to get your confidence back and get used to playing in games again. I just thank God for helping me. I truly think God speeded up the (healing) process. I'm a Christian, and I'd been praying, asking God to help me through this."

Alabama Coach Nick Saban said that Davis probably could have played against Western Kentucky, but the senior was held out to give his injury a little more recuperation time.

Davis added that he didn't want to miss an extended period of games as he did his junior season, when he missed four games due to involvement with a textbook controversy on campus.

His head coach is glad he's back and healthy.

"I think Marlon has made steady improvement since we've been here, and is certainly playing much more stronger and physical this year" said Saban.

"Drew has just worked himself into a position of being a player," Saban said. "He got a lot stronger, and he got a lot bigger He's a smart guy, and he usually plays with a lot of intelligence in a game.

"We want those guys to continue to improve, but we're certainly very pleased with the progress and the performance that we've gotten from them to this point"

Saban would like to see more continuity and consistency on the offensive line. "This is a little bit some of the problem that we had last year, at the end of the year We get three guys playing different positions in the offense line, so you lose a lot of continuity," he said. "Marlon goes out. "Smitty" (Andre Smith) being out. Mike Johnson playing a different spot (at left tackle). I think it affects the confidence and the continuity of the entire group. Hopefully, we can get that (first) group back together, and we can develop more continuity and confidence in some of these backup players, so if they're called on, so if they're called on later in the season, we can play with a little more consistency."

On that note, Drew Davis felt he played much better against Clemson than he did in his second start, a lackluster 20-6 Bama win over Tulane. "That's on me," he admitted. "You have to prepare each week with intensity. I feel like I was better mentally prepared for the Clemson game. Whenever you go in the film room, you never play as good as you think you did, and you never play as bad as you think you did. A lot of corrections can come from more mental intensity. That's what we focus on, each week."

During the third game against Western Kentucky, a game that was never in doubt, Davis was replaced by true freshman John Michael Boswell for much of the second half. However, after starting left tackle Andre Smith left the game to rest up for Arkansas the next week, Drew Davis re-entered, this time at left tackle. "We all practice different positions during practice," said Drew Davis. "We just slide over, and see what it takes."

Tide coaches were attempting to find a three-guard, three tackle rotation. Ross apparently captured the third guard slot after Marlon Davis returned, and Boswell was at least the leader in the clubhouse for the number three tackle job. "He's picked things up a little faster than the others," Saban said.

Nose guards Terrence Cody and Josh Chapman both know who to watch out for on double teams.

"I'd have to say Marlon Davis and Antoine Caldwell are the best double-teamers," said the massive 6-foot-5, 365-pound Cody, who would know. Because of where he lines up, Cody rarely faces Drew Davis.

Drew Davis has filled opening at right tackle

Stuart McNair

"Marlon's a guard that, if he gets his hands inside on you, you might as well give it up," said Chapman. "His hands are just strong, and if he gets that leverage on you, it's a done deal. Marlon is a guard that most people underestimate; I think he gets after it more than anybody. I feel like he's gotten better at every aspect of the game."

Both Davises pride themselves on being part of an effective offensive line. "I think we expect to be the best that we can be," said Marlon Davis. "We expect to be 100 per cent on all our assignments and be a sound group each and every day. We expect to lead the team, because we are a veteran group, so the team can rally around us and we can all work harder."

For his part, Marlon Davis prefers quiet leadership. "I'm not a vocal guy, so I try to lead by example," he said. "Anything I do, I just try to do my best. Sometimes you have to say things, but as far as me, I'm not too much of a rah-rah, loud type of guy. I try to lead by example, push through things and work hard and set a good example for the younger guys."

That's basically the approach both the Davises of the right side take: walk softly, get their steps correct, carry out their assignments, and bring a lunch pail to work. ■

Gang Of One

Terrence Cody has made big impression

Terrence Cody is biggest man on Tide squad

Stuart McNair

When one hears about a football player weighing 400 or more pounds, it brings to mind the story about the high school coach berating the biggest man on his team, exhorting him to be as mean as he is large. "If I was as big as you, I'd be the heavyweight champion of the world!" screamed the coach.

"Well, then," replied the gentle giant, "why aren't you the lightweight champ?"

Terrence Cody may be better than he is big. And he's plenty big, though nothing like he was a few months ago.

Being big is nothing new to Alabama's junior nose tackle. When he was a kid, he wasn't able to play Pop Warner Football because he was so much bigger than the other boys. He wasn't too big to play in high school, but only got to play a couple of years for academic reasons. That had to hurt Riverdale High School Coach Scott Jones

Cody was 6-4, 285 when he entered high school. That's plenty big enough to play in college, perhaps in the NFL.

Cody didn't get to play football his senior season. "Bad grades," he said, made him ineligible. Those same bad grades "and bad ACT, bad SAT" sent him to junior college. He got up to 420 at Gulf Coast Community College in Perkinston, Mississippi, where he was the best player on an 11-0 national championship team.

Part of the deal he made with Alabama Coach Nick Saban in the recruiting process was to lose some weight. Now Cody's feeling light, 360.

Cody, 6-5, was excited to be considered a prospect for Alabama. He pinches himself every day, barely able to believe he was able to go from junior college to "a place like this. I didn't think a place like this would recruit junior college players." And he's almost surprised he was able to get it done.

In junior college, one of his coaches was Stevon Moore, who had played for the Cleveland Browns when Saban was an assistant coach there. "He told me what to expect from Coach Saban," Cody said. "He told me he would push me to my full potential. I said I could handle that."

The first thing Cody heard from Saban was that Cody had to

lose weight. And he did. He got on a program losing three pounds a week and reported for fall camp at 365. He's dropped another five since then. Now the goal is "maintain."

Cody acknowledges his celebrity status on campus. Students want to meet "Mount Cody," he said. He enjoys the attention, being called "ZIP Code Cody" and "the state of Cody," and he enjoys shaking hands with fellow students and answering their questions about Alabama football.

But Job One is playing nose tackle for the Tide. "I think I'm playing good," Cody said. "The coaches think I'm doing good. There are things I need to improve."

He has shown he can work. Cody said he thought there was a chance he would never play for Alabama because of "weight issues." He had to "do a lot of running and a lot of extra work. I had to get up early in the morning to do extra work. Every morning I'd wake up at six and hope that it was going to pay off, because getting up at that time of the morning was hell."

Now he's making life hell for opposing offenses. "For my size, I can do things other people can't," he said.

But he wants to set the record straight on that dunking the basketball stuff. Oh, he can dunk. But, "They exaggerated on the 360," he said of reports that he could do a 360-degree twist on his dunk.

Saban discussed the decision to recruit Cody. "We evaluate all the guys and there is no perfect player," Saban said. "Certainly we were out there looking for a nose guard type and there were a couple other guys that we recruited that might fit the bill. Some of them didn't qualify and we hope will qualify in the future (Kerry Murphy). But Terrence was a guy that certainly had the size and initial quickness.

"We knew what his problem was in terms of conditioning relative to his ability to sustain and that was our big issue. Stevon Moore, who is the defensive coordinator at Gulf Coast, played for us at the Cleveland Browns and was a very good player, very strong, tried to help us a little bit to get him in shape and not get to out of whack relative to his weight so that when he came here and reported we would get him to a point where he could play and sustain. He did a good job of that, Terrence did a good job of that, hence we got him down to 365. Still we would like to improve that part of his game and he is working hard on that and we are working hard with him to try and do it."

Cody said he can tell the difference. He's quicker, has better conditioning, and "my knees don't hurt so much," he said.

Cody splits time at nose tackle with redshirt freshman Josh Chapman, one of the strongest men on the team. Chapman has been impressed with his teammate.

"I've never seen a guy that big move like he does," said Chapman, who weighs "only" 305 pounds. "He's very athletic. I haven't seen anything like him with my own eyes until I saw him. It's pretty freaky."

Chapman said during summer workouts that the defensive linemen would play seven-on-seven games against the offensive linemen, performing the skill jobs of a football team. (Antoine Caldwell was quarterback for the offensive linemen and Nick Gentry quarterback for the defensive linemen.) "The first time I saw him go deep for a pass was..." Chapman paused. "I don't know how to describe it," Chapman continued.

On goalline and short yardage situations, and even at other times (for instance staring the game against the spread offense of Western Kentucky), Cody and Chapman are in the game together.

"We call that our 'Elephant look'," said Chapman. "We also have a 'Hippo look'."

A man who frequently has seen the business end of Terrence Cody is Alabama all-star center Antoine Caldwell. Caldwell was up close and personal against Cody throughout camp and in the limited (but regular) work the first team offense gets against the first team defense in practice each week.

Before Bama's opening game against Clemson, Caldwell said, "He's a heavy load."

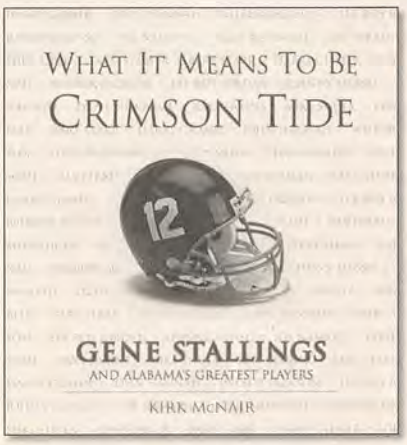
Cody, a 6-5, 265-pound nose tackle, had an outstanding game as Alabama opened the season with a 34-10 upset of ninth-ranked Clemson in the Georgia Dome in Atlanta. Although his statistics were relatively modest—two solo tackles, one for a loss, and two assists—Cody was an obvious presence in the Clemson backfield, disrupting the Tigers' offense and eliminating the threat from Clemson's two great running backs, C.J. Spiller and James Davis.

Cody was selected Southeastern Conference Defensive Lineman of the Week.

"I didn't see a play where they didn't double-team him," said former nose tackle Lorenzo Washington, now at end. "They triple-teamed him on a couple of occasions. He was re-establishing the line of scrimmage, taking on two or three blockers at a time. Even if the front can't make the play, he definitely freed up (linebackers) Ro (Rolando McClain) and (Dont'a) Hightower a

What It Means To Be Crimson Tide

Gene Stallings and Alabama's Greatest Players



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Terrence Cody sees double- and triple-team blocking

Stuart McNair

bunch of times to make plays. He's definitely established himself as a force on the line."

After the game, Caldwell said, "I wish I could have given them (Clemson) a 'heads up' about Terrence."

Linebacker Cory Reamer said, "He's 365 pounds and I'm sure everybody's going to be watching film on him, trying to figure out ways to stop him."

Caldwell acknowledged that opposing teams would know about Cody from watching tapes. "I'm not so sure that will help much, though," he said. "I'd recommend taking a lot of Advil the night before."

Cody said that working against Caldwell has been a big advantage. "He's the best center I've faced," Cody said. "He's made me a better player. He's made me understnad the need to be smarter and quicker."

Javier Arenas, who is 5-9, 198, remembers when he first heard that Alabama was recruiting a player who weighed more than twice as much (at the time) as Arenas.

"I heard, but it didn't mean anything," he said. "When I saw how big he was, that still didn't mean anything.

"Then I saw him working, and that's impressive."

Tide tailback Glen Coffee has run into Cody a few times in Bama practices. "You just get stopped," Coffee said.

Rashad Johnson knew that Cody was coming in for a recruiting visit last winter and was interested in seeing a guy that big. "We had a party and he came through the door and it was like, 'Whoa, that's him!' He spent most of the time chilling on the porch. I had a good time getting to know him."

Johnson said, "When he came in for summer conditioning work, we were running 26 110s (110-yard sprints, 26 of them). He may not have made his time, but that first time he was able to finish. That showed me something. There were guys who have been here who weren't able to finish."

Cody remembers that, too. "It was real tough," he said. "There were a couple of times when I was like, 'Man, is this for me?' And I was like, 'Man, I feel like quitting.' But I thought about it and told myself, 'Nah, that ain't me. That ain't me.' I just kept pushing myself."

Johnson said the "coaches have done a good job getting the best 11 on the field." He said he realized "early in fall camp, when we put the pads on," that Cody would be one of the 11 best on defense. "He was moving the offensive line around. I knew if he was in shape he would be starting."

"I think he's definitely picked up on a lot of the technique stuff," Washington said. "Anybody can be big, but just because you're big doesn't mean you're going to be a good football player. He's definitely learning to play behind his pads, use his hands and stuff like that, just become immovable, just unstoppable."

Washington said opponents will have to use extra men on Cody, and "that takes people off us and lets other people make plays."

Washington said that he wished opponents would try to block Cody one-on-one, but knows that isn't going to happen. When that suggestion was made to Cody, he said, "I think that would be a mistake."

One thing the arrival of Cody did was allow Washington to move from nose tackle, where he was undersized, to defensive end, where he is much more effective.

Cody hopes to play professional football one day. But not for awhile. He said he "thought about" going after this junior season, but said he would be back for his senior year.

"For my size, I can do this, and I can do that," Cody said. "Most of the people my size can't do that. I had all these coaches telling me that one day I could play in the NFL and be a good player. But my main thing is I've got to get my head in the books." ■

WhatIfSports.com is a website that specializes in answering the great "What if?" questions in sports by simulating games between historical teams in professional football, basketball, baseball and hockey, or collegiate football and basketball. In this article, WhatIfSports utilizes its free SimMatchup technology to rank the ten BCS champions.

by Paul Bessire, WhatIfSports.com

Top Ten BCS Champions

Few topics bring about as much passion and debate in this nation as college football. More than any other sport in this nation, college football teams represent communities, states and regions. The pageantry, tradition and sense of unity are unmatched. Go anywhere in Ohio, yell "O-H" and see how long it takes to hear an "I-O." The same goes for "Roll Tide" in Alabama (or "War Eagle", depending where you are), or "Go Blue" in Michigan, or countless other chants in other areas of the country. As a sports fan, nothing beats the smells, sights and sounds of a college football game day on a major campus.

Jamie Squire/Getty

But for many years, much of the debate about college football centered upon the lack of a true champion. In 1998, that debate was at least partially addressed with the formation of the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), which followed the Bowl Alliance and Bowl Coalition to unify all bowls and ensure that the top two teams, as determined a combination of computers and human voters, would meet in a national championship game. The BCS completed its tenth year with the culmination of the 2007 season, won by the LSU Tigers. While it has not been without controversy, has been tweaked a few times and is not a true playoff, the BCS has been successful at keeping us entertained and spreading the wealth. The final scores in half of the championship games have been within a touchdown and, until this season, there had been no repeat champions. With all of the discussions of the relative Miami and USC dynasties, nine different teams representing six different conferences (the "BCS" conferences) have won it all.

But, how strong are these ten teams? Could they have withstood a playoff? Were they worthy of the championship? Where do they rank against other champions? Were any seasons down years? Have the LSU Tigers, the only team with multiple BCS championships, produced two of the weaker or stronger teams in this brief history of the BCS?

This is where WhatIfSports.com steps in with the answers. We took the BCS to the next level by creating a tournament of all ten BCS champions. To do this in as fair a manner as possible, we "played" all ten teams against the other championship teams on neutral field 100 times each – that's almost 5,000 games (took a little over five minutes). Teams then were ranked by winning percentage in those simulations. Each winning percentage is shown in parentheses next to the team, and is followed by an overall team value from the site's Dream Team feature. This value is not necessarily indicative of how well the team will play against other teams in the sim, but it is a relative measure of the overall talent of the players who contributed that season.

For information about how you could be in control of your own college football program, please see the **Gridiron Dynasty Promo Code** section below.

Number 10
2002 Ohio State Buckeyes

(29.2% winning percentage, 60.35 WIS value)

Usually being included on a list at all is a good thing, but in this case it means that the 2002 Ohio State Buckeyes were the worst of the ten BCS champions. OSU defeated highly touted Miami (FL) 31-24, in a controversial double-overtime game in the Fiesta Bowl. Senior quarterback - and Academic All-American Player of the Year - Craig Krenzel and senior safety Mike Doss shared the BCS MVP honors. They may not fare well here, but one can be assured that the computer would not have liked them to defeat Miami either. Often referred to as the "Luckeyes," Ohio State won ugly that season, with seven of its 14 victories coming by a touchdown

Vincent Laforet/Allsport

or less. They prepared better than anyone, played with heart, rarely made mistakes and always found ways to win. Head coach Jim Tressel, the 2002 National Coach of the Year, is exceptional at seeing the big picture with every decision he makes, and at finding ways to make the most of the strengths of his team – all that, and wearing obnoxious red vests. In this analysis though, talent (and the stats that talent produces) wins out and the Buckeyes just cannot hang with the other teams.
Notable Contributors: Craig Krenzel (QB), Mike Doss (S), Maurice Clarett (RB), Chris Gamble WR/CB, Mike Nugent (K).

Number 9
1998 Tennessee Volunteers (35.4%, 62.32)

Peyton Manning was *supposed* to win a championship in his four years at Tennessee. Jamal Lewis was *supposed* to be a Heisman frontrunner. Manning, along with Marcus Nash and Leonard Little, graduated without a ring after being destroyed by Nebraska the year before, and Lewis tore a ligament in his knee midway through the season. So, instead, it was Tee Martin and Travis Henry who brought a title to Rocky Top with a victory over Florida State (though the next season's FSU team beat them in this ranking) in the first BCS Championship Game, at the Fiesta Bowl. While Manning had put up big numbers, Martin managed the game, kept turnovers to a minimum (he had just six interceptions to 19 touchdowns) and let the defense and stacked running game take over en route to a historic undefeated season. Tennessee fans had anticipated a championship for four years with Manning at the helm. With all of their personnel losses, and coming off the defeat to the Cornhuskers, few thought that the pre-season number ten ranking was justified. A national title was definitely not *supposed* to happen, and their lack of (statistical) superstars may have kept this team from ranking higher, but the true beauty of sports is that the *supposed to* does not always happen.
Notable Contributors: Tee Martin (QB), Travis Henry (RB), Peerless Price (WR), Al Wilson (LB), Raynoch Thompson (S).

Number 8
1999 Florida State Seminoles (36.7%, 67.89)

The 1999 BCS national championship game, played in the Sugar Bowl, is remembered more for Michael Vick's individual performance than it is for Florida State's 17-point win in a game that was rarely in doubt. Truth be told, that Virginia Tech squad was little more than a one-man band, so FSU did not have to play the level of competition that many of these other squads did, 2002 OSU included, to win its championship. On the season as a whole, FSU was fairly impressive. The team was a wire-to-wire number one, outscoring its opponents by an average score of 38-17. That sounds great, but in terms of talent, the team looks like it should be ranked tenth on this list. From this Seminole squad, only Sebastian Janikowski and Chris Hope remain major contributors on Sundays. This was a veteran team that started 21 upperclassmen (including the kicker and punter) and played better as a *team* than any of its opponents.
Notable Contributors: Chris Weinke (QB), Peter Warrick (WR/KR/PR), Sebastian Janikowski (PK), Corey Simon (DT), Tommy Polley (LB).

Stephen Dunn/Getty

Number 7
2006 Florida Gators (38.8%, 67.9)

Urban Meyer took over as the Florida head coach in 2005 and brought home the BCS Trophy one season later. Meyer's blend of creativity, guts and aggressiveness perfectly matched the speed and talent available to the Gators in recruiting. The former Bowling Green and Utah leader created an experienced defense, bringing in Reggie Nelson and Ryan Smith to lead the defensive backfield. On offense, he added some youth and versatility with freshmen Tim Tebow, Percy Harvin and a host of other weapons. Add those to smart players like Chris Leak and Jarvis Moss, and Florida built

Andy Lyons/ALLSPORT

Harry How/Getty

itself a champion with relative ease. That being said, the Gators still needed USC to lose to UCLA in the last week of the season to get into the BCS championship game. The rest is history though, as Florida destroyed Ohio State, 41-14, thoroughly confusing Heisman Trophy winner Troy Smith.
Notable Contributors: Chris Leak (QB), Percy Harvin (WR), Tim Tebow (QB), Reggie Nelson (S), Ryan Smith (DB), Jarvis Moss (DE).

Number 6
2000 Oklahoma Sooners (42.1%, 69.19)

Another team that greatly exceeded expectations, the Oklahoma Sooners announced their re-emergence on the national landscape of college football with authority in 2000, holding Florida State to just two points in the BCS Championship Orange Bowl. Similar to most of the teams already discussed, this OU team, coached by Bob Stoops, had a sound defense that made plays, a deep running game, good return teams and a quarterback who managed the game pretty well. The Sooners started the season at #19 in the AP poll, and actually slipped a spot after the first week before making their ascent to #1 with a 31-14 home victory over then-#1 Nebraska. Even before that, the team put itself firmly in the championship picture with a blowout win over #10 Texas in the Red River Shootout, and a ten-point victory at #2 Kansas State, which it later defeated again to win the Big 12 championship game and earn a spot in the Orange Bowl. Quarterback Josh Heupel's numbers were not exceptionally pretty and no running back gained over 850 yards, but the offense got the job done, while the defense and special teams were outstanding.
Notable Contributors: Josh Heupel (QB), Roy Williams (S), Rocky Calmus (S), Torrance Marshall (LB).

Number 5
2007 LSU Tigers (42.1%, 74.47)

The Tigers lost twice last season, both times to SEC bowl teams in triple-overtime, meaning they overcame more than any other team on this list just to be on it. Like Florida the year before, LSU needed a ton of help after losing to Arkansas in its last regular-season game. First, LSU defeated Tennessee in the SEC Championship, thanks to an interception return for a TD that provided the difference in the 21-14 game(which was started by backup quarterback Ryan Perriloux). Even after that big win, LSU needed #1 Missouri to lose to Oklahoma, and #2 West Virginia to lose to Pitt. When both of those events shockingly occurred, LSU still had to jump over #4 Georgia in the final BCS regular season poll to meet Ohio State in the final. Somehow, all of that happened. A month later, LSU took care of the rest on the field, as Matt Flynn threw four touchdown passes and they rolled over OSU 38-24 in New Orleans. 2007 was a crazy season, full of upsets, intrigue and excitement. In the end though, LSU left little doubt as to which team had the best year.
Notable Contributors: Matt Flynn (QB), Jacob Hester (RB), Glen Dorsey (DT), Craig Steltz (S), Early Doucet (WR), Ali Highsmith (LB).

Number 4
2003 LSU Tigers (60.2%, 74.17)

This list is more about the top four, plus several other teams that caught lightning in a bottle to grab spots 5-10 (well, as we will see later, it may be more like one amazing team, three great teams and then the rest). Ironically, the biggest winning percentage gap between teams on this list falls between two teams from the same school. This version of the LSU Tigers featured more talent across the board than the most recent version, and was coached by Nick Saban, now back in the SEC with Alabama. Three one-loss teams all staked a claim to a national championship game bid in 2003. After defeating Georgia for the SEC Championship, LSU got in to face Oklahoma, even though USC was #1 in both human polls (USC would get its revenge the next season, helping to keep SEC champion Auburn out of the game). LSU answered many critics with its play on the field at the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans, defeating Oklahoma 21-14. LSU, the nation's top scoring defense, shut down Jason White and the OU offense, while freshman Justin Vincent earned MVP honors with 117 rushing yards and one touchdown.
Notable Contributors: Matt Mauck (QB), Justin Vincent (RB), Joseph Addai (RB), Michael Clayton (WR), Chad Lavalais (DT), Corey Webster (CB).

Number 3
2005 Texas Longhorns (60.8%, 77.38)

The 2005 USC Trojans were considered one of the greatest college football teams ever assembled...at least until they met up with Vince Young and the Texas Longhorns in the Rose Bowl. Young made the right plays when it mattered, notably a touchdown scramble on fourth-and-eight in the last minute, leading UT to the 41-38 victory. There may not be as many "notable contributors" on this list as for many of the other champions, but this was a big, physical and deep team. Of course, and most importantly, it also had one of the best athletes and big-game performers ever to play the game at quarterback. Vince Young may not have won the Heisman Trophy (Reggie Bush did), but he was clearly the most valuable player on the best team in the land. Young finished the season with 3,036 yards passing and 26 touchdowns while completing 65.2% of his passes. On the ground, he added 1,050 rushing yards. After defeating then-#4 Ohio State 25-22 in the second week of the season, Texas scored 40 points or more in its next 11 games. In total, the Longhorns outscored their opponents by an average score of 50-16.
Notable Contributors: Vince Young (QB), Michael Huff (S), Rodrique Wright (DT), Jamaal Charles (RB).

Doug Pensinger/Getty

Robert Laberge/Getty

Number 2

2004 USC Trojans (69.7%, 78.43)

As the only true national championship team (thus far) in USC's dynastical run under Pete Carroll, the 2004 USC Trojans made a huge statement in the championship game, destroying Oklahoma 55-19 in the Orange Bowl. Even with Heisman Trophy winner Matt Leinart, fellow Heisman finalist Reggie Bush, 1,000-yard rusher LenDale White and two wide receivers taken in the first 51 picks of the latest NFL draft, this offense was not as (statistically) dominant as others on this list. It didn't have to be. Despite those marquee names on offense, the USC defense may have been even better in 2004. Led by Shaun Cody, Mike Patterson, Lofa Tatupu and Matt Grootegoed, the Trojans held eight of their 13 opponents under 14 points, which is almost unheard of in the pass-happy Pac-10. The year before, Oklahoma probably considered itself very fortunate to make it into the national championship over USC. In 2004, however, OU may have preferred to forsake that chance and let the also-undefeated Auburn Tigers attempt to stand in the way of the USC machine. If you want to know who would win between 2004 USC and 2004 Auburn, the game can be played at WhatIfSports.com. We have run it a few times ourselves, and Auburn shares a similar outcome with the Sooners.

Notable Contributors: Matt Leinart (QB), Reggie Bush (RB), LenDale White (RB), Dwayne Jarrett (WR), Shaun Cody (DT), Lofa Tatupu (LB), Mike Patterson (DT).

Number 1

2001 Miami Hurricanes (84.5%, 85.99)

As if the "notable contributors" list below does not say enough about this team, consider the backups who received little playing team for Miami in 2001: Sean Taylor (S), Najeh Davenport (RB), Kellen Winslow II (TE), Vince Wilfork (DT), Antrel Rolle (CB), Eric Winston (OT), Vernon Carey (OG). In total, 16 players from this team were drafted in the first round of the NFL Draft. On the season, Miami outscored its opponents by an average score of 43-10, including wins by 59 and 58 points over #14 Syracuse and #12 Washington, respectively, as well as a 37-14 thumping of Nebraska in the championship game.

Notable Contributors: Ken Dorsey (QB), Clinton Portis (RB), Frank Gore (RB), Willis McGahee (RB), Andre Johnson (WR), Jeremy Shockey (TE), Bryant McKinnie (OT), Joaquin Gonzalez (OT), William Joseph (DT), Jonathan Vilma (LB), D.J. Williams (LB), Ed Reed (S), Phillip Buchanon (CB), Mike Rumph (CB). ■

Gridiron Dynasty Promo Code

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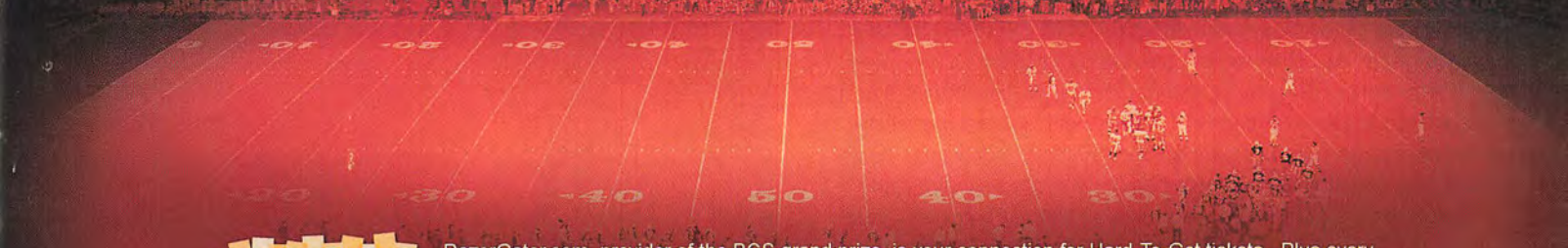

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Young Guns

First-year players take advantage

It's probably not a good thing to have to play freshmen on a football team. But if you have to, it's good to have freshmen who can contribute. When Scout Media pronounced Alabama as having had the nation's best recruiting class last February, many Crimson Tide followers began figuring out where these newcomers would fit into the starting lineup. Older and wiser observers said, "Not so fast," or something like that.

Veteran college football coaches and observers agree on the importance of experience, which is something freshmen don't have.

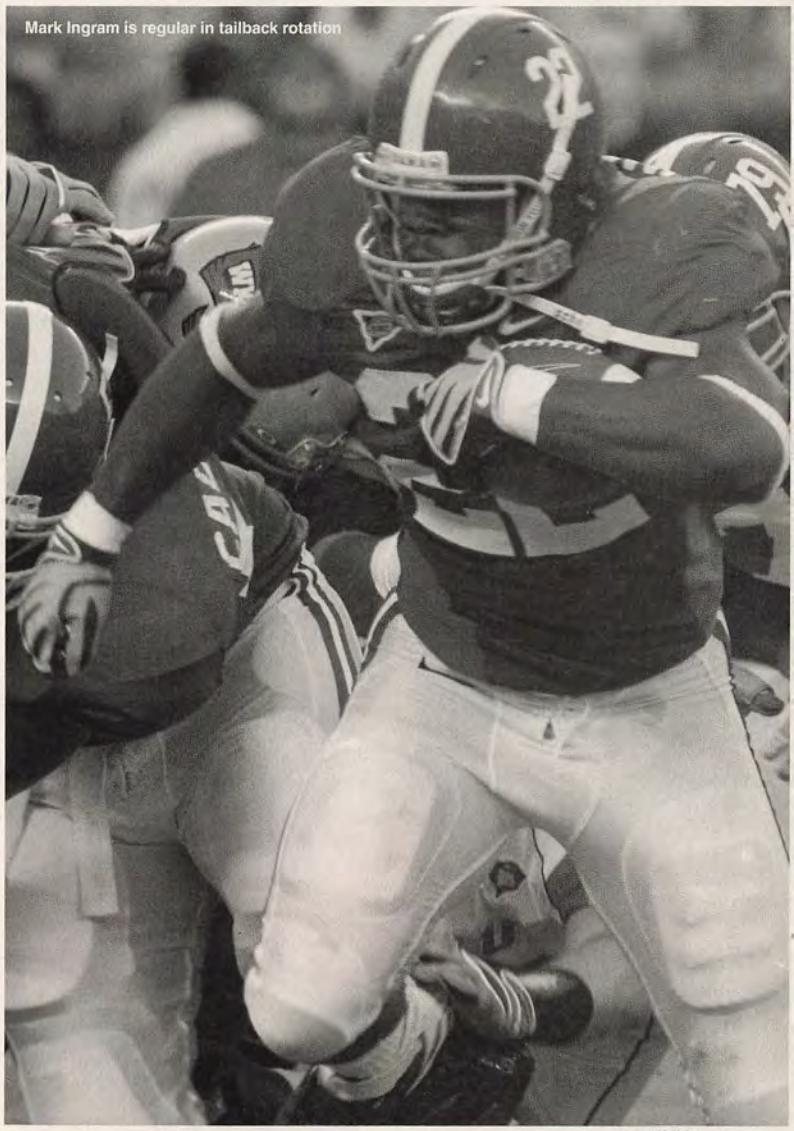
Alabama Coach Nick Saban once worked for Woody Hayes at Ohio State, and Saban credits the legendary Buckeyes coach with having said, "For every sophomore you play, you'll lose one game." That statement may first have been made by someone else. Most in the South thought it was the great General Robert Neyland at Tennessee. (Many Alabama fans probably attribute the adage to Paul Bryant, but he didn't say it.) The saw since has been appropriated by the NFL, rookies being blamed for losses.

Saban has put that best-in-the-nation recruiting class to work. Most of the newcomers are freshmen. There is one junior college contributor in the group, nose tackle Terrence Cody (see Page 10).

Alabama won't play enough games this year to lose one for every true freshman who plays. (There are some redshirt freshmen contributing, too.)

Two true freshmen started in the first game of the year, and by the time Bama got to Southeastern Conference play more than 60 per cent of the true freshmen on the team (15 of 24) had seen playing time. And they weren't just taking up space.

This is not the ideal situation. Saban said, "Sometimes you try to redshirt guys and you can't. I'd like to get to the point where we redshirt most of our freshmen and only have a few guys each year that go out there and play because you have enough depth on your team that you don't have to play them. I think this year some of these guys are playing because they deserve to play based on the competition and because we were thin which created a great opportunity for them. "



Mark Ingram is regular in tailback rotation

Stuart McNair

It is not earth-shaking news when a true freshman earns a starting job in the first game. In addition to wide receiver Julio Jones and linebacker Dont'a Hightower, who started against Clemson this year, the Bama squad includes three others who were frosh starters in their first games—Andre Smith in 2006 and Rolando McClain and Kareen Jackson last year.

One thing that stands out about many such players is that they start in their freshman season (and sophomore and junior), but not their senior season. And the reason for that is they leave college early for the NFL.

That has to be considered a possibility by Alabama coaches.

Defensive Head Coach Kevin Steele mentioned that in the pre-season. He pointed out that recruiting now presumes very good players may be in college only three years, and those players are more apt to be used in their first season.

The concept of "depth chart" in Alabama football is intriguing. Coach Saban claims there isn't a depth chart until the team begins playing games. Until then there are only "personnel groupings."

When the first depth chart of the season was issued, it was notable that Jones and Hightower were listed first team. It was also interesting that junior Glen Coffee was listed as the number one tailback and that true freshman Mark Ingram was listed as co-number two with returning starter Terry Grant. In the Clemson game (and subsequent games), Ingram was clearly a solid number two and challenging for the starting job.

Ingram may have been a surprise to some. He wasn't to Saban.

Saban said,"Mark was a really good player in high school. You could see he had the ability to make cuts and accelerate out of a cut. Because of the way he is built, he ran with some power so he is a great combination guy and really a complete back. He has good track speed and has good hands."

Regular back-ups have included Marcel Darius on the defensive line, B.J. Scott at slotback, and Jerrell Harris at linebacker.

Historically, special teams have been the starting point for many players and a handful of freshmen have found themselves playing in coverage and return roles. They have included Courtney Upshaw, Mark Barron and Chris Jackson, who have also seen playing time at jack linebacker, strong safety, and wide receiver, respectively. Cornerback Robby Green and linebacker Chris Jordan have been on special teams.

When Leigh Tiffin was temporarily benched with a mild concussion, kicker Corey Smith got the call. It wasn't pretty. Smith, a rare kicker signee, missed an extra point and field goal and had a kickoff out of bounds. But Smith has that behind him now. It's not unusual for a freshman kicker to have the jitters. Even Tiffin suffered through a disastrous outing as a freshman at Arkansas in 2006.

Conventional wisdom has been that offensive linemen need an extra year of strength work and learning to pass block. But when Andre Smith was injured, Saban saw the need to find at least one more tackle so he didn't have to move Mike Johnson from left guard to fill in at tackle. In the third game of the year he inserted John Michael Boswell in at right tackle and shifted right tackle Drew Davis to left tackle, giving Smith a break. Later in the game two other freshmen tackles, Tyler Love and Barrett Jones, got playing time.

Saban said, "We are just playing the best players. If we think a guy is going to play and make a contribution to the team, then we go ahead and play him. It is a great opportunity for a lot of freshmen because we lack depth at certain positions. We have some other positions where some freshmen may get an opportunity to play in the near future. Some other freshmen may be affected by how much they play relative to someone's injury.

"This is not premeditated. They are playing because they deserve to play, because they are the better guys, they are the better back-up, so we have to go ahead and make a choice to play them on special teams or at their positions."

College football is not easy. It stands to reason that it is particularly difficult for a man coming from high school.

Saban said, "They don't know what to expect. Obviously they made some mistakes and played with some high anxiety. I think some of those guys made a huge improvement and I think everybody is in a little bit of a different state of psychological flux. Some guys are managing it well in terms of what their roles are and some guys are frustrated for a good reason: they want to play more. They have to manage their frustration so it doesn't affect their performance."

Julio Jones has lived up to big reputation

Stuart McNair

As of this writing, freshmen who have not played are defensive linemen Undra Billingsley and Damion Square, defensive end/linebacker Michael Williams, linebacker Glenn Harbin, defensive backs Alonzo Lawrence, Robert Lester and Wesley Neighbors, running back Ivan Matchett and quarterback Star Jackson.

In the Western Carolina game Bama finally got some snaps for back-up quarterback Greg McElroy. Later walk-on Thomas Darrah went in at quarterback. After the game, Saban said he had played Darrah instead of Jackson because he didn't want to take the redshirt off Jackson. But, he added, that didn't mean Jackson wouldn't play later this season.

Mike Johnson, who started at right tackle last year as a third-year sophomore and is at left guard this year, said, "I didn't even sniff the field as a true freshman. This is great experience for these guys. All of them have showed maturity." ■

FOOTBALL *By Kirk McNair*

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Is expansion of Bryant-Denny a sure thing?

Just before the start of the 2008 football season, Alabama Athletics Director Mal Moore sat down with the media to introduce his new right hand man, Dave Hart. Moore also discussed some issues that had been in rumor stages, including opening next season against Virginia Tech in the GeorgiaDome in Atlanta in a game similar to this year's Clemson game.

Of particular interest was his pronouncement that the athletics department is gearing up for another expansion of Bryant-Denny Stadium.

A few weeks later Alabama President Dr. Robert E. Witt issued a statement that could be interpreted as pessimistic regarding expansion of the stadium.

Moore said, "We are working on the athletics department side with the architects so that we will be ready when we get the nod from the president. We don't know when that will be. Hopefully, it will be soon. But if it's not soon, we've got a 92,000-seat stadium, and it's a nice stadium.

"Hopefully, good things will happen. And we're working hard on this end to be ready when we get the nod."

Both Moore and Witt said that Davis Architects of Birmingham would provide a number of options as The University explores paying for an expansion. The athletics department has had

an artist's rendering of what the expansion in the South end zone could look like, but architects only recently have been commissioned to provide plans.

There is no doubt that the next expansion will take Bryant-Denny Stadium to a seating capacity of over 100,000.

Any delay in expansion will be because of a sluggish economy. In fact, the state of the economy is the reason expansion was not started earlier this year, according to reports from The University.

The economic situation was in part responsible for a cut in state funding for The University. For Witt and other administrators, that meant a need to focus on the pressing issues related to non-athletics functions. Alabama athletics, unlike all other athletics programs at public universities in the state, has never received funding from the state. Nevertheless, athletics administrators are sensitive to spending when The University has financial stress.

Alabama football continues to be a very hard ticket, particularly at top levels. It has been over 20 years since a football game in Tuscaloosa was not a sellout. There is a long waiting list of those prepared to make the high-dollar donation necessary to obtain a skybox. (Current number of skyboxes: 123–two with a 40-seat capacity, 18 with a 24-seat capacity, two with a 23 seat-capacity, four with a 20 seat-capacity, 93 with a 16-seat capacity and four with a 15 seat-capacity.)

Alabama football is also being pressured to have more student seating, which is not an income-producer for athletics. Dr. Witt, though, wants all students to have the opportunity to have a seat for home football games. With enrollment now at 27,052 and headed to 28,000 next fall, more student seats are needed.

The latest expansion was completed prior to the 2006 season with capacity going from 83,818 to 92,138. With nothing but hard sellouts for each game (it is estimated that as many as 25,000 arrive in Tuscaloosa each game day without tickets), the next expansion on the Bryant Drive side of the stadium has been in talking stages almost since the 2006 addition. The hiring of Nick Saban as head football coach prior to the 2007 season added to the ticket-buying interest of Bama fans.

Still, Moore and Witt have to look at the overall economic picture. Financing of the expansion will be in great part through donations.

In a five-year facilities plan presented to University Trustees last summer, the expansion of the stadium was listed at an estimated cost of $80 million. The 2006 expansion cost $50 million. A project being on the facilities plan is not guaranteed, but no one expects Bryant-Denny expansion is an "if," only a "when."

Best guess is that construction will begin after this season and be complete in time for the 2010 season. But that is a guess and subject to change.

Another issue made painfully clear with each home football game is that infrastructure beyond the South end zone must be considered with expansion. Parking space is already a major need on campus, and the addition of a few thousand more seats means the need for several hundred more parking spots.

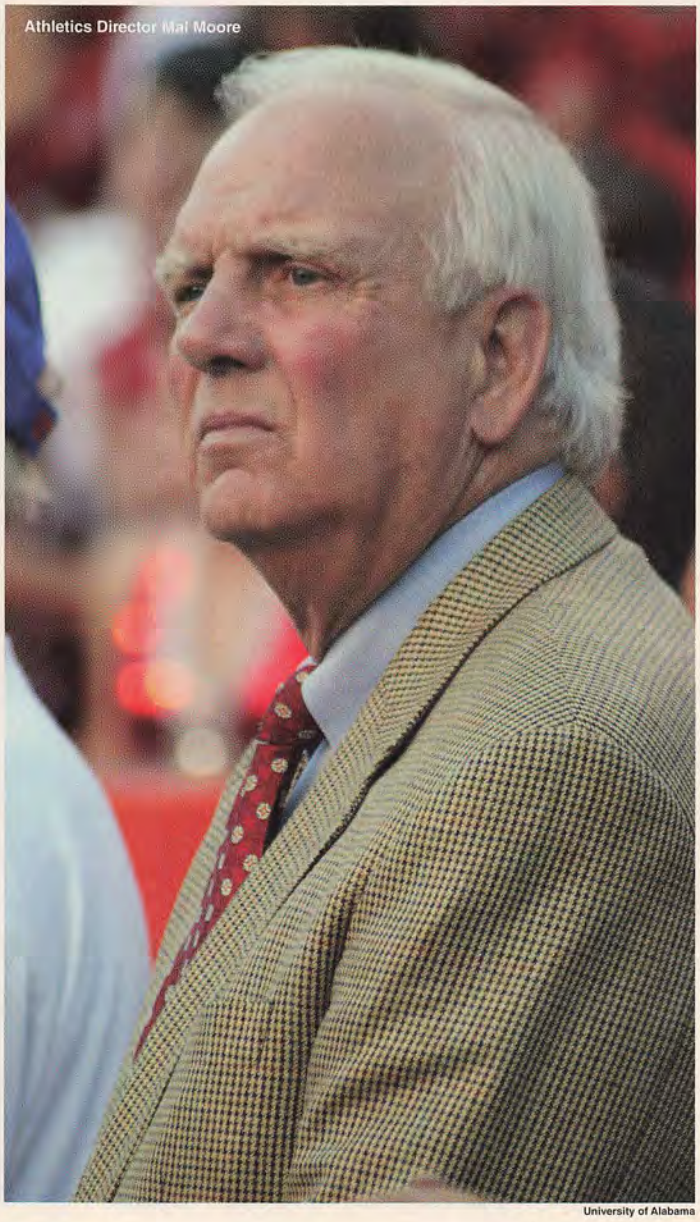
Although Alabama has "only" the fourth largest stadium in the Southeastern Conference (behind Tennessee, Georgia and LSU), an addition of only 609 seats would make Bryant-Denny Stadium the second largest in the conference. It would take approximately 9,909 new seats to pass Tennessee (102,037) for largest in the SEC, but that may not be necessary. Tennessee is altering Neyland Stadium with skyboxes, which is expected to reduce capacity by some 2,000.

Bryant-Denny is the seventh largest on-campus stadium in the nation.

Denny Stadium) was opened in 1929 (it became Bryant-Denny by act of the Alabama legislature in 1976) with capacity 12,000. Bleachers were added in both end zones in 1946, increasing capacity to 31,000. In 1961 there was an addition of 12,000 seats (and an elevator and press box), making capacity 43,000. In 1966 seating went to 60,000.

In 1988 the West upper deck was added, increasing capacity to 70,123.

That was followed by the 1988 East upper deck with two levels of skyboxes, increasing capacity to 83,818. The 2006 expansion of the North end zone upper deck, sky boxes and club level brought Bryant-Denny to its current 92,138. ■



Athletics Director Mal Moore

University of Alabama

2008-09 College Football Bowl Schedule

(Dates and times are tentative and subject to change)

BOWL	DATE/TIME (CT)	SITE	MATCHUP	TV
Congressional	Dec. 20/10 a.m.	Washington, D.C.	Army/Navy/AtLarge vs. ACC	ESPN
New Mexico	Dec. 20/1:30	Albuquerque	Mountain West vs. WAC	ESPN
St. Petersburg	Dec. 20/5:30	St. Petersburg	Big East vs. C-USA	ESPN2
Las Vegas	Dec. 20/7:00	Las Vegas	Mountain West vs. Pac-10	ESPN
New Orleans	Dec. 21/7:00	New Orleans	Sun Belt vs. C-USA	ESPN
Poinsettia	Dec. 23/7:00	San Diego	Mountain West vs. Pac-10	ESPN
Hawaii	Dec. 24/7	Honolulu	WAC vs. Pac-10	ESPN
Motor City	Dec. 26/6:30	Detroit	Big 10 vs. MAC	ESPN
Meineke Car Care	Dec. 27/Noon	Charlotte, N.C.	ACC vs. Big East	ESPN
Champs Sports	Dec. 27/3:30	Orlando	ACC vs. Big Ten	ESPN
Emerald	Dec. 27/7:00	San Francisco	ACC vs. Pac-10	ESPN
*Independence	Dec. 28/7:00	Shreveport	SEC vs. Big 12	ESPN
*Papajohns.com	Dec. 29/2:00	Birmingham	SEC vs. Big East	ESPN
Alamo	Dec. 29/7:00	San Antonio	Big Ten vs. Big 12	ESPN
Humanitarian	Dec. 30/3:30	Bloise	ACC vs. WAC	ESPN
Holiday	Dec. 30/7:00	San Diego	Big 12 vs. Pac-10	ESPN
Texas	Dec. 30/7:00	Houston	Big 12 vs. C-USA	NFL
Armed Forces	Dec. 31/11 a.m.	Fort Worth	Mountain West vs. C-USA	ESPN
Sun	Dec. 31/1:00	El Paso	Pac-10 vs. Big East/Big 12/Notre Dame	CBS
*Music City	Dec. 31/2:30	Nashville	SEC vs. ACC	ESPN
Insight	Dec. 31/5:00	Tempe	Big Ten vs. Big 12	NFL
*Chick-fil-A	Dec. 31/6:30	Atlanta	SEC vs. ACC	ESPN
*Outback	Jan. 1/10 a.m.	Tampa	SEC vs. Big Ten	ESPN
Gator	Jan. 1/Noon	Jacksonville, Fla.	ACC vs. Big East/Big 12/Notre Dame	CBS
*Capital One	Jan. 1/Noon	Orlando	SEC vs. Big Ten	ABC
Rose	Jan. 1/4:00	Pasadena	BCS vs. BCS	ABC
Orange	Jan. 1/7:00	Miami	BCS vs. BCS	Fox
*Cotton	Jan. 2/1:00	Dallas	SEC vs. Big 12	Fox
*Liberty	Jan. 2/4:00	Memphis	SEC vs. C-USA	ESPN
*Sugar	Jan. 2/7:00	New Orleans	SEC vs. BCS	Fox
International	Jan. 3/11 a.m.	Toronto	Big East vs. MAC	ESPN2
Fiesta	Jan. 5/7:00	Phoenix	BCS vs. BCS	Fox
GMAC	Jan. 6/7:00	Mobile	C-USA vs. MAC/WAC	ESPN
BCS Championship	Jan. 8/7:00	Miami	BCS 1 vs. BCS 2	Fox

*SEC affiliated bowl game

(When not having a conference champion participating in the BCS National Championship Game, the BCS will have the following conference champions as host teams: Sugar-SEC; Rose-Pac-10 and Big Ten; Fiesta-Big 12; Orange-ACC.)

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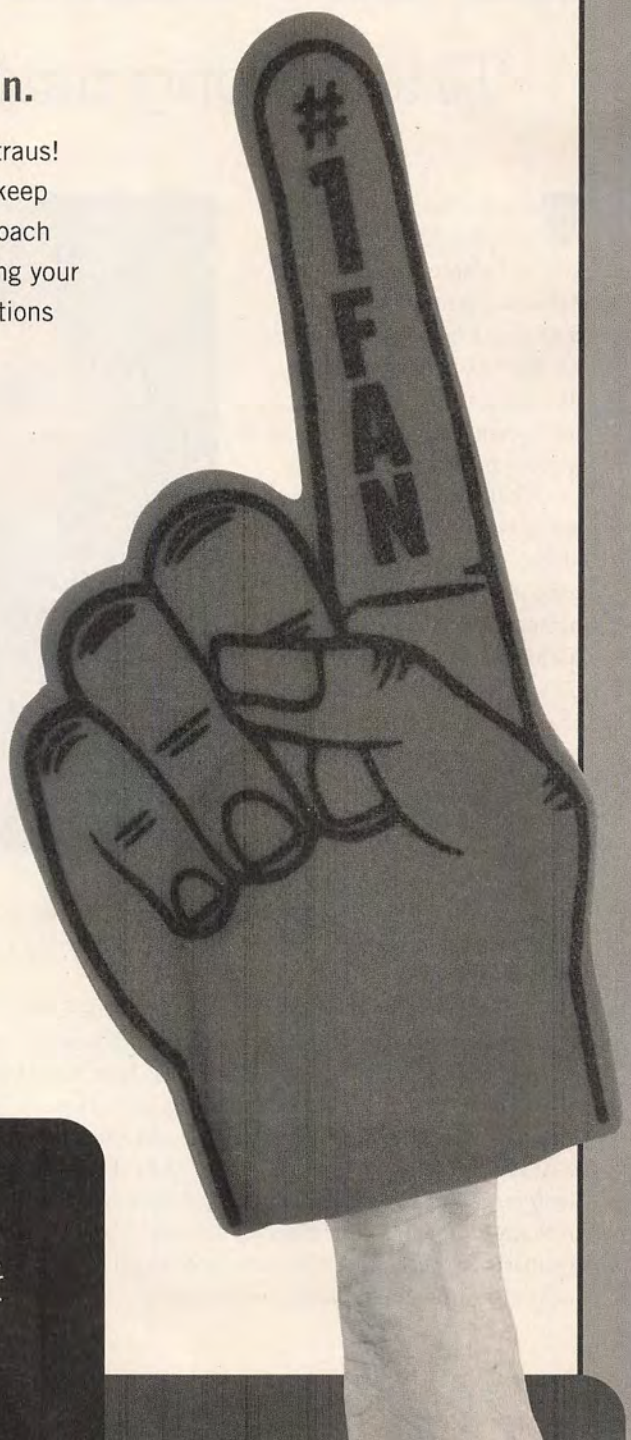

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Balancing Act

Tide among nation's most accomplished

Coach Sarah Patterson (second from right) with All-America performers (from left) Kassi Price, Morgan Dennis, Kayla Hoffman

University of Alabama

Very few teams on the collegiate level have this kind of balance. The 2009 Alabama gymnastics team is both very experienced with five All-America performers among its veterans, and very young with seven freshmen on its 18-woman roster.

That's what gymnastics—really good gymnastics--is all about: balance. Few programs have enjoyed the kind of balanced excellence that Alabama has over the past 30-plus years. On the apparatus, the balance is physical, tangible, but it's also mental, keeping everything on an even keel while performing mind-bending, and body-twisting routines. For the gymnasts who compete at Alabama for Sarah and David Patterson, now in their 31st year coaching the Crimson Tide, balance is a must in all phases of life.

The balance that the Pattersons bring to the Crimson Tide--that demands excellence in the gym, in the classroom, and in the world outside of both--is why Alabama has been to 26 consecutive NCAA Championships, finished in the top 10 nationally 26 times, finished among the Super Six 24 times, and among the nation's final four 21 times. It is why Alabama leads the Southeastern Conference in SEC Academic Honor Roll accolades and the nation in NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship winners. It's why Alabama gymnasts are such a positive force in the community, helping make the world around them a little better.

The balance that Alabama gymnasts learn under the Pattersons holds them in good stead throughout their lives. An example of that came this fall when Barbara Mack Harding, a member of one the Pattersons' early teams, became the first woman honored with the Paul W. Bryant Alumni-Athlete Award, given annually to former UA athletes who have gone on to lead lives of distinction. Harding, an All-America, NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship winner and a Rhodes Scholar finalist, led Alabama to its first NCAA Championship appearance in 1983. After graduating she attended Georgetown Law School, and after stints as a prosecutor with the U.S. Justice Department and as the Deputy Director of the White House Security Review, she is now a partner in a prestigious Washington law firm.

As she was honored on the field of Bryant-Denny Stadium during

half-time of football's home opener against Tulane, Sarah Patterson made sure her current team, veterans and rookies alike, were paying close attention.

"Barb is what our program is all about," Sarah Patterson said. "She is the perfect role model for our ladies. She was successful in all aspects of the college experience and she has carried that into her life as an attorney, a wife and mother."

Another example for the current members of the Tide to follow is in the gym every day now as two-time NCAA Champion and NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship winner Dana Dobransky Duckworth moved into her current role as a full-time assistant coach in September when David Patterson moved into the volunteer coach role. Duckworth, who was a volunteer coach with the Tide for nine years prior to this season, joins Assistant Coach Bryan Raschilla, now in his 13th season at Alabama.

Such great role models have made an obvious impact on the current crop of Alabama gymnasts who combined a sixth place NCAA finish with a 3.6 team grade point average last season, and still made time for extensive community service hours. The Tide lost just three routines from last year's NCAA Championship appearance and, with 18 gymnasts, including seven freshmen, there should be plenty of routines to choose from as they go through the 2009 season.

Leading the way for the Tide is its junior class, with NCAA Champion and All-America Morgan Dennis, All-America honorees Kassi Price and Casey Overton, and three-time SEC Champion Ricki Lebegern, along with sophomore All-America Kayla Hoffman and senior All-America Brittany Magee. Four of those six--Dennis, Hoffman, Price and Lebegern--went all-around a majority of last season.

Three was Dennis' magic number least season. She earned three All-America citations as a sophomore (all-around, floor exercise and uneven bars), moving her career total to six. She also earned a trio of individual SEC titles (vault, balance beam and floor exercise) and a trio of NCAA Regional titles (all-around, vault and floor exercise). She also earned All-SEC and SEC Academic Honor Roll recognition.

Price earned All-America on the uneven bars for the second year in a row last season, and won NCAA Regional titles on the uneven bars and balance beam. A Scholastic All-America, she also earned a place on the prestigious ESPN the Magazine/CoSIDA Academic All-America At-Large team. She was second team All-SEC and a member of the SEC Academic Honor Roll.

Overton had a breakout season in 2008, earning All-America on the balance beam and winning the SEC beam title. She earned All-SEC honors and Scholastic All-America honors and a place on the SEC Academic Honor Roll. During the 2008 season she saw action on all four apparatus.

Lebegern not only successfully defended her 2007 SEC balance beam title, she added SEC gold on the vault last year earning All-SEC honors to go with Scholastic All-America and SEC Academic Honor Roll recognition. She was also named to the SEC's 2008 Community Service Team.

Hoffman had an outstanding freshman year, starting things off by earning a 4.0 GPA in the fall, her first semester in the classroom since grade school after being home-schooled. She went on to earn All-America on the vault, second team All-SEC, and was named to the inaugural Freshman All-SEC team. She earned Scholastic All-America and SEC Academic Honor Roll recognition.

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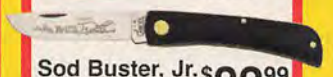

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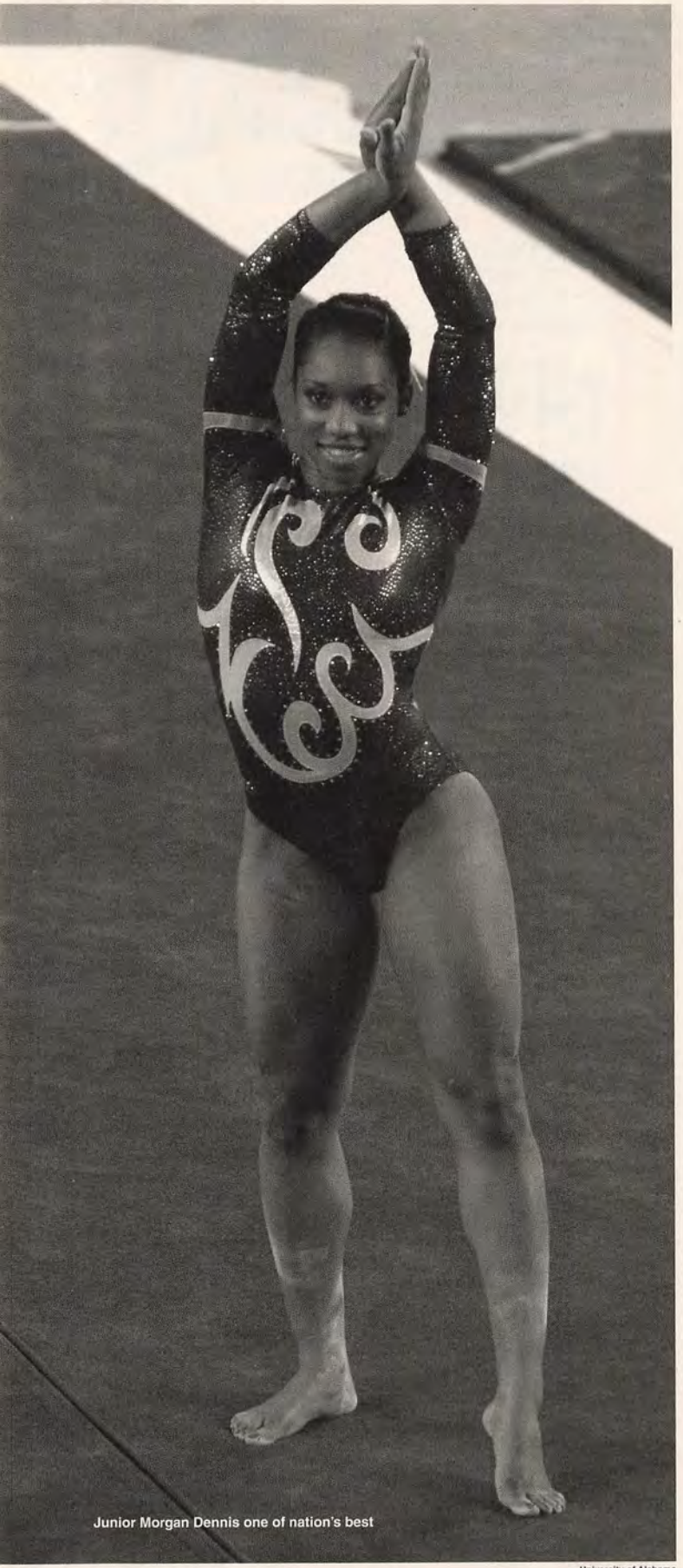

Junior Morgan Dennis one of nation's best

University of Alabama

2008-09 Alabama Gymnastics Roster

NAME	EVENT(S)	Hgt	Class	Hometown (School)
Alyssa Chapman	All-Around	5-3	Jr	Spartanburg, S.C. (Dorman)
Julie Cotter	All-Around	5-2	Fr	Orefield, Penn. (Northwestern Lehigh)
Morgan Dennis	All-Around	5-2	Jr	Westampton, N.J. (Holy Cross)
Kara Feeney	All-Around	5-1	Fr	Cockeysville, Mo. (Dulaney)
Jocelyn Fowler	All-Around	5-0	Fr	Tuscaloosa (American Christian)
Kayla Hoffman	All-Around	5-3	So	Union, N.J. (Home Schooled)
Ricki Lebegern	All-Around	4-11	Jr	Annandale, Va. (Falls Church)
Brittany Magee	All-Around	5-2	Sr	Arlington, Texas (Coppell)
Megan Mashburn	All-Around	5-4	So	Greenville, S.C. (Evans)
Amanda Montgomery	All-Around	5-4	Sr	Jacksonville, Fla. (Bartram Trail)
Ashley O'Neal	All-Around	5-2	Sr	Kennesaw, Ga. (Kennesaw Mtn)
Casey Overton	All-Around	5-2	Jr	Virginia Beach, Va. (Alpha Omega Academy)
Erika Pearson	All-Around	5-3	Fr	Chickamauga, Ga. (Gordon Lee)
Kassi Price	All-Around	5-4	Jr	Plantation, Fla. (Crenshaw Performing Arts)
Ashley Priess	All-Around	5-3	Fr	Wheaton, Ill. (Lakota West)
Jacqueline Shealy	All-Around	5-2	Jr	Tuscaloosa (Spring Creek Academy)
Geralen Stack-Eaton	All-Around	5-3	Fr	Horsham, Penn. (Home Schooled)
Rachel Terry	All-Around	4-10	Fr	Hoover (SMIC Academy)

Head Coach: Sarah Patterson

Assistant Coaches: David Patterson, Bryan Raschilla, and Dana Duckworth

In addition to earning Scholastic All-American and SEC Academic Honor Roll accolades for the third year in a row, Magee added an NCAA Regional title on the balance beam. She competed on the vault, beam and floor exercise last season.

Senior Scholastic All-America Ashley O'Neal worked her way into the balance beam and floor exercise lineup through the last part of the 2008 season after fighting through knee problems that slowed her early. O'Neal's floor exercise routine helped Alabama's floor lineup (one of the Tide's strongest events in 2008) get off to a strong start, helping boost its scoring potential. Junior Jacqueline Shealy continued to come back from the torn ACL that ended her freshman season and should be even stronger this season.

Senior Scholastic All-America Amanda Montgomery competed on the uneven bars and balance beam last season, but off-season shoulder surgery will slow her going into this season. Junior Scholastic All-America Alyssa Chapman and sophomore Scholastic All-America Megan Mashburn both saw time on the vault last season and will be working to make the competitive six in 2009.

To go with the Tide's 11 veterans, Alabama has added seven rookies, making this year's freshman class one of the largest in program history. That number includes a trio of U.S. National team members--Ashley Priess, Geralen Stack-Eaton and Julie Cotter. Other freshmen are Kara Feeney, Jocelyn Fowler, Erika Pearson and Rachel Terry

Having chosen Alabama because of its championship legacy, all seven women are excited about the opportunity to add to it and continue to keep the Crimson Tide at the top.

There's an excitement in the gym during fall practice. That excitement level rises with the competition, including six home mets in Coleman Coliseum. This year Bama adds the 2009 NCAA Regional Championship to its home floor, that meet scheduled for April 4.

Alabama gymnastics remains one of the biggest draws in women's athletics, averaging over 11,000 fans per meet last season

and twice selling out the Coliseum to the tune of 15,075. With Kentucky, Denver, LSU, Auburn, Stanford, Oklahoma and North Carolina making their way to Tuscaloosa, Crimson Tide gymnastics will once again be a very hot ticket. That is especially so for Bama's "Power of Pink" meet on February 27 against Auburn. The annual event, which helps raise awareness in the fight against breast cancer, has sold out each of the last three years.

The Tide's championship season starts at the SEC Championships, held in Nashville on March 21, checks into Tuscaloosa for the regional, and ends with the NCAA Championships in Lincoln, Nebraska, April 16-18 with Alabama striving for a fifth NCAA crown. ■

Staff Both Same And Different

One might think of a volunteer coach as some young person hoping to get a break and move up to fulltime status. That has happened this year for a former Alabama gymnastics star.

Dana Dobransky Duckworth, two-time NCAA balance beam champion for Alabama, has moved up from volunteer coach to assistant coach for Sarah Patterson's Crimson Tide gymnastics team.

Most interesting about the adjustments of the Crimson Tide gymnastics coaching staff is the new volunteer coach.

There aren't too many assistant coaches at Alabama who have had the job security of David Patterson, the husband of Sarah. He has actually been considered co-head coach, although his title has been associate head coach.

Now David, in his 31st year with Bama gymnastics, has become volunteer coach.

"We are very excited about these changes, ones that will certainly make our program even stronger," Sarah Patterson, also in her 31st season at Alabama, said. "Bringing Dana in as a full-time assistant will give us four extremely knowledgeable and experienced coaches in the gym every day, a tremendous benefit for our student-athletes."

David Patterson has retired from The University, which allows him to assume the volunteer coaching position. He had surgery after the 2005 season to fuse four vertebrae in his spine to help ease chronic back problems.

"David and I had discussed these changes as a possibility several years from now, but the more we discussed it this summer, the more we realized this change would be beneficial sooner rather than later," Sarah said. "With the pain David was experiencing this summer we realized it would be advantageous to reorganize our staff in this way now. There was no search; there was no thought of someone else. I always knew if we had a coaching vacancy, Dana would the first person considered."

Sarah added, "Not only will this development help position Alabama for several more championship runs, it will also help our family long term from a health and quality of life standpoint.

"David and I are excited about the changes and welcome Dana's enthusiasm, passion and love for our program into the gym on a full-time basis. We feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to work side-by-side with one of the athletes we believe represents the epitome of everything we have strived to achieve in our program and to have her help shape and mold the next generation of Alabama gymnasts."

Duckworth leaves a successful career in pharmaceuticals sales to become a full-time coach, joining the Pattersons and Assistant Coach Bryan Raschilla, now in his 13th season with the Tide.

"This move could not have come about if everyone involved had not been completely committed to this program and helping it remain at the forefront of collegiate gymnastics," Sarah said. "Dana is leaving a very lucrative position. For David and me this move is a sacrifice financially, but we all realized this was something that would very much help his health and our program."

David Patterson has coached Alabama since 1978 when he was the first hire Sarah Patterson made after she accepted the head coaching position. The Pattersons, who were married in 1983, completed their 30th season together last year, coaching the Tide to its 26th consecutive top-10 finish and 24th season in the top-6. Under the Pattersons, Alabama has won four NCAA Championships, five Southeastern Conference titles, 23 NCAA Regional Championships and posted 21 "final four" national finishes.

"This reorganization is perfect for our program at this time," Sarah said. "Recruiting travel had become more difficult for David, which is something we looked at in terms of his long-term health. As the volunteer coach he will not recruit off campus and can focus completely on the development of our team."

Duckworth, who is entering her 10th season as a coach with the Tide, led Alabama to the 1991 NCAA Championship and won NCAA balance beam titles in 1992 and 1993. As a volunteer coach and choreographer, she has put together four NCAA Championship floor exercise routines, including junior Morgan Dennis' in 2007, and coached Alabama legend Ashley Miles to an unprecedented four consecutive Southeastern Conference floor titles.

"I am extremely grateful to Coach Moore (Athletics Director Mal Moore) for his ongoing support of our program and this move in particular," Sarah said. "I also want to thank Mike Ward, our compliance director, for making sure this change was a possibility from an NCAA rules standpoint." ■

David Patterson

University of Alabama

Dana Duckworth

University of Alabama

Bryan Raschilla

University of Alabama

Recipe For Success

Tide a mixture of experience, talent, depth

A healthy mixture of youth, experience, depth and talent gives the 2008-09 edition of the Alabama swimming and diving teams very exciting prospects for the coming season and beyond.

There are more than 60 swimmers on the combined men's and women's rosters of Coach Eric McIlquham's sixth Alabama squad. There is a great deal of experience throughout the squad, but still an element of youth with only seven seniors, four on the men's side and three for the women.

McIlquham is joined on deck by nationally renowned Diving Coach Pat Greenwell, Associate Head Coach Sonya Porter, and Assistant Coaches James Barber and Stefan Gherghel.

The vast majority of both teams' numbers come from the sophomore and junior classes. Of the women's 35, there are 12 juniors and 13 sophomores. For the men, out of 28 athletes, 10 are juniors and eight are sophomores.

"With so few seniors, in a way, we're still pretty young," McIlquham said. "But at the same time, for the men and the women, our junior class has been making a big impact for us since they were freshmen, so they have plenty of experience to help us grow and continue to move up the ladder both in the (Southeastern) conference and nationally."

The men, who finished 22nd at the NCAA Championships last season, have five All-America performers returning. Three of those are juniors, including diver Aaron Fleshner, who was third at the NCAA Championships last season off the three-meter board, the event he won at the SEC Championships last February. Fleshner parlayed his collegiate success into an invitation to the U.S. Olympic Trials this past summer where he finished seventh, solidifying his place as one of the nation's up-and-coming stars.

The Tide's fortunes get a boost this season with the return of All-America Mark Randall who took an Olympic-year redshirt last season. One of the world's top distance swimmers, Randall holds the school 1000 and 1650 freestyle records.

Randall will combine with sophomore All-America Catalin Cosma, who was the SEC's top freshman in the both the 500 and 1,650 freestyle last year, finishing fourth in the 1,650 and seventh in the 500. Far from done, he went on to finish sixth in the mile and 13th in the 500 freestyle at the NCAA Championships. Randall

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and Cosma will give Alabama one of the most formidable distance duos in the nation.

Junior All-America freestyler Alin Mihalca stars in individual swims and also on relays. The same goes for senior All-America backstroker Chris Perry, who competed at the U.S. Olympic trials this summer in the 100-meter backstroke.

Also returning for the Tide is the breaststroke duo of Riley Boulden and Luke Boutwell. The juniors both scored at last year's SEC Championships and both continue to improve race-by-race.

Alabama expects help from its rookies, led by Joe Ziegler, a member of the U.S. National team who swam at this summer's Olympic Trials. Ziegler is a middle distance freestyle and backstroke phenom who will give the Tide a boost across the board. He will also give the Tide some strong relay legs.

"With Joe, Mark, Catalin and Alin, we have a real shot at our 800 freestyle relay record," McIlquham said. "It's been on the books a long time, and I'd love for those guys to go out there this season put some new names up on the board."

The Tide's current 800 freestyle relay record was set back in 1983.

Joining Ziegler in the freshman class are butterflyers Oliver Basse and Ryan Dugan, breaststroker Andrew Reeves, and freestylers Andrea Rezzonico and Kyle Weeks. Dugan will also see backstroke duty and Weeks will swim butterfly.

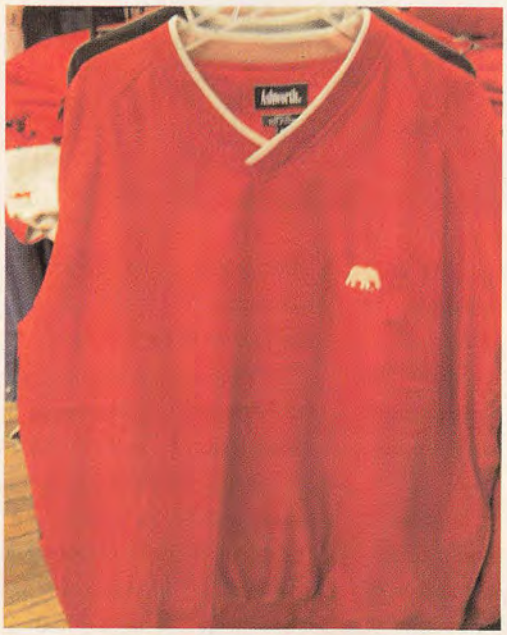
Alabama's diving corps, led by Fleshner, includes junior

Aaron Fleshner among nation's top divers

University of Alabama

Agustina de Giovanni one of Tide's best ever

University of Alabama



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Chris McCormick and sophomores Adam Booher and Chris Hearn. All three scored at last year's SEC Championships and stand ready to make another big points-push this year.

Leading the way for the Tide in the butterfly events will be sophomore Denes Zubcsek, who finaled in the 200 butterfly at last year's SEC Championships. Sophomore Daniel Armstrong, who scored in the 200 breaststroke at the SEC Championships will also see individual medley action again this season. Junior Drew Finelli, who scored in the SEC mile last year, will again add to the Tide's distance fortunes.

Senior Kevin Greer provides quality depth in the sprint freestyle and relay events, senior Andy Schnack will see backstroke action and senior Van Diehl joins Zubcsek in the butterfly events. Juniors Kyle Lee (IM), Chris McClendon (backstroke), Sam Morgan (freestyle) and sophomores Alan Axford (backstroke), James Edwards (freestyle), Daniel Rozick are all expected to contribute to the Tide's success this season.

On the women's side it all starts with the junior class led by Agustina de Giovanni. De Giovanni had an amazing sophomore campaign. She shattered the school record in the 400 IM and as part of the 400 freestyle relay. She earned All-America honors in the IM and breaststroke events, setting the South American 400 IM record and competing at the Olympics in the 200 breaststroke. She figures on Alabama's all-time top 10 list in eight different events and is a threat to score anytime she steps up on the blocks.

"Agustina had a tremendous year and she's ready to build on that this season," McIlquham said. "She's part of that junior class that has worked so hard and continues to get better each and every day. They're an exciting bunch and I'm looking forward to seeing the steps they take this season."

Head Swimming and Diving Coach Eric McIlquham

University of Alabama

As a group the Tide's juniors stayed in the Tuscaloosa this summer to build on their sophomore season and put themselves in a position to make an even bigger impact this season. De Giovanni, along with Allyson Angle, Brooke Baldi, Hannah Brinks, Katrice Ewanich, Elizabeth Hughes, Julie Richards, Nichole Roberts, Elle St. Charles, Shannon Van Hoy, Kacey Weddle and Maggie Zblewski have continued to grow together, making up the core nucleus of the Tide's resurgence.

Baldi, as part of the Tide's school record holding 200 freestyle relay, competed at the NCAA Championships last season while Angle, Brinks and St. Charles all figure among Alabama's all-time top 10, Angle in the 100 and 200 backstroke, Brinks in the 100 butterfly and St. Charles in the 200 butterfly.

Hughes leads a very talented diving corps, after finishing third in the platform event at the 2008 SEC Championships. The sophomore trio of Lauren Dunn, Baylee Ellson and Olivia Covey and Kasie Talon all return to the boards this season. At last year's SEC Championships Talon finaled off the one and three-meter boards, Ellson scored in all three events and Covey finaled off the platform. Those four, joined by talented freshman Carrie Dragland, give Alabama arguably the best diving crew in the nation.

"We're very good on the diving end of things," McIlquham said. "We have five divers that can go in and score at the conference level and all have a legitimate shot, on any given day, of making the NCAA meet."

Not to be outdone, the Tide's sophomores are also coming off a very good year. Ida Persson, ranks among Alabama's all-time top 10 in the 50 and 100 freestyles as well as the 100 butterfly and was part of the Tide's school record setting 200 and 400 freestyle relays. Kate Shannon Gray stands among the Tide's all-

Alabama Swimming & Diving Rosters

Men

NAME	EVENT	HT	Year	Hometown (High School)
Daniel Armstrong	Individual Medley	6-2	SO	Madison (Bob Jones)
Alan Axford	Backstroke	6-0	SO	Oneonta
Oliver Basse	Butterfly	5-11	FR	W. Palm Bch, Fla. (Cardinal Newman)
Adam Booher	Diving	5-6	SO	Washington, D.C. (Gaithersburg)
Riley Boulden	Breaststroke	6-2	JR	Indianapolis, Ind. (North Central)
Luke Boutwell	Breaststroke	6-2	JR	Pike Road (Alabama Christian)
Catalin Cosma	Freestyle	6-0	SO	Arad, Romania
Van Diehl	Butterfly	5-9	SR	Nashville, Tenn. (Montgomery Bell)
Ryan Dugan	Butterfly/Backstroke	6-2	FR	Marietta, Ga. (Marietta)
James Edwards	Freestyle	5-11	SO	Memphis, Tenn. (Christian Brothers)
Drew Finelli	Freestyle	6-2	JR	Fairfax Station, Va. (Robinson)
Aaron Fleshner	Diving	5-6	JR	Spring, Texas (Klein Collins)
Kevin Greer	Freestyle	5-10	SR	Sylacauga
Chris Hearn	Diving	6-1	SO	Hoover
Kyle Lee	Individual Medley	5-11	JR	Hendersonville, Tenn.
Clint McClendon	Backstroke	6-1	JR	Millbrook (Montgomery Academy)
Chris McCormick	Diving	6-0	JR	Dunwoody, Ga. (St. Pius X Catholic)
Alin Mihalca	Freestyle	6-2	JR	Baia-Mare, Romania (Pitesti)
Sam Morgan	Freestyle	6-4	JR	St. Louis, Mo. (Parkway South)
Chris Perry	Backstroke	5-10	SR	Delafield, Wisc. (Arrowhead)
Mark Randall	Freestyle	6-3	RS JR	East London, South Africa
Andrew Reeves	Breaststroke	6-2	FR	Birmingham (Vestavia Hills)
Andrea Rezzonico	Freestyle	6-3	FR	Castel San Pietro, Switzerland (Liceo Cantonale)
Daniel Rozick	Freestyle	5-10	SO	Port Matilda, Penn. (State College Area)
Andy Schnack	Backstroke	5-10	SR	Quincy, Ill.
Kyle Weeks	Freestyle/Butterfly	6-1	FR	Poway, Calif.
Joe Ziegler	Freestyle/Backstroke	6-2	FR	Tallahassee, Fla. (Leon)
Denes Zubcsek	Butterfly	5-9	SO	Budapest,Hungary (Kolcsey Ferenc)

Women

NAME	EVENT	HT	Year	Hometown (Last School)
Caitlin Anderson	Backstroke	5-6	SR	Richmond, Va. (Mills E. Godwin)
Allyson Angle	Backstroke	5-8	JR	Wildwood, Mo. (Lafayette)
Brooke Baldi	Freestyle	5-7	JR	Metamora, Ill. (Notre Dame)
Cameron Bass	Freestyle	5-8	FR	Birmingham (Briarwood Christian)
Katie Black	Backstroke	6-0	SO	Henderson, Nev. (Coronado)
Hannah Brinks	Butterfly	5-6	JR	Mechanicsville, Va. (Atlee)
Britney Busch	Breaststroke	5-6	SO	Parkland, Fla. (Marjory Stoneman Douglas)
Olivia Covey	Diving	5-6	SO	Centennial, Co. (Grandview)
Cassandra Craddock	Freestyle	5-7	SO	Jacksonville, Fla. (Bolles)
Lauren Cuervo	Backstroke/Freestyle	5-8	FR	Hollywood, Fla. (Cardinal Gibbons)
Agustina de Giovanni	Breaststroke	5-11	JR	Santa Fe, Argentina (Nuestra Senora De Guadalupe)
Carrie Dragland	Diving	5-0	FR	Woodinville, Wash. (Bothell)
Lauren Dunn	Diving	5-5	SO	San Diego, Calif. (Escondido Charter)
Baylee Ellson	Diving	5-7	SO	Jacksonville, Fla. (Olympia)
Katrice Ewanich	Freestyle	5-4	RS SO	Cornwall, N.Y. (Cornwell Central)
Kate-Shannon Gray	Freestyle	5-7	SO	Northport (Tuscaloosa County)
Caitlyn Harrison	Freestyle	5-5	FR	Manassas, Va. (Osbourn Park)
Shelby Hixon	Freestyle/IM	5-5	FR	Woodstock, Ga. (Etowah)
Elizabeth Hughes	Diving	5-4	JR	Maryville, Tenn. (Maryville)
Kelsie Ludolph	Freestyle	5-10	SO	Peoria, Ill. (Notre Dame)
Samantha Lugar	Freestyle	5-5	SO	Rockledge, Fla. (Cocoa Beach)
Jenna Montgomery	Backstroke	5-7	SO	Louisville, Ky. (Dupont Manual)
Ida Persson	Butterfly	5-7	SO	Ostersund, Sweden (Nykoping)
Catherine Reinagel	Butterfly	5-9	FR	Hoover (Spain Park)
Julie Richards	Freestyle	5-8	JR	Brunswick, Ga. (Glynn Academy)
Nicole Roberts	Freestyle	5-9	JR	Albuquerque, NM (Albuquerque Academy)
Suzanne Schwee	Butterfly/Backstroke	5-6	FR	Ashburn, Va. (Stone Bridge)
Mary-Kate Sellers	Breaststroke	5-2	SR	Birmingham (Mountain Brook)
Elle St. Charles	Butterfly	5-6	JR	Signal Mountain, Tenn. (Baylor)
Kasie Talon	Diving	4-11	SO	Dickinson, Texas (Dickinson)
Paige Troyan	Breaststroke	5-7	SO	Loveland, Ohio (Kings)
Shannon Van Hoy	Freestyle	5-7	JR	Charlotte, N.C. (Charlotte Catholic)
Vanessa Von der Heyde	Freestyle	5-8	SR	Johannesburg, South Africa (German School)
Kacey Weddle	Butterfly	5-5	JR	Signal Mountain, Tenn. (Baylor School)
Maggie Zblewski	Breaststroke	5-7	JR	Pewaukee, Wisc. (Arrowhead High School)

Head Coach: Eric McIlquham
Associate Head Coach: Sonya Porter
Diving Coach: Pat Greenwell
Assistant Coaches: James Barber, Stefan Gherghel
Graduate Assistant Coach: Franck Southon

time top 10 in the 400 IM and 200 backstroke. Gray and Brinks also gained valuable experience this summer competing at the U.S. Olympic Trials.

Also back for the sophomore class are Katie Black (backstroke), Britney Busch (breaststroke), Kelise Ludolph (freestyle), Samantha Lugar (freestyle), Jenna Montgomery (backstroke) and Paige Troyan (breaststroke).

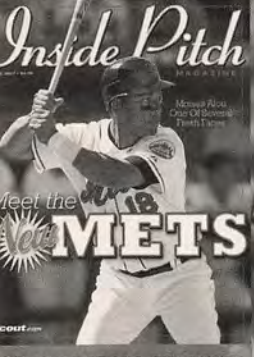
Leading the Tide's seniors is Vannessa Von der Heyde a member of the Tide's school record 200 and 400 freestyle relays and among the Tide's all-time best top 10 in the 200 freestyle. Backstroker Caitlin Anderson and breaststroker Mary-Kate Sellers round out the Tide's senior class.

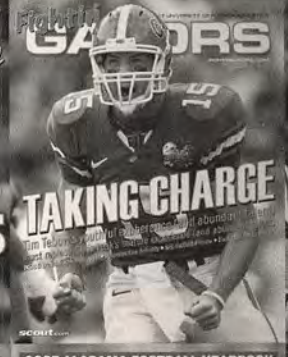
In addition to rookie diver Dragland, freshmen Suzanne Schwee and Lauren Cuervo both look to make an immediate impact for the Tide. Both women will competed in the backstroke events with Schwee also seeing butterfly duty and Cuervo seeing freestyle action as well. Schwee competed in this summer's U.S. Olympic Trials. Also looking to make some noise as freshmen are Cameron Bass (freestyle), Caitlyn Harrison (freestyle), Shelby Hixson (freestyle/IM) and Catherine Reinagel (butterfly).

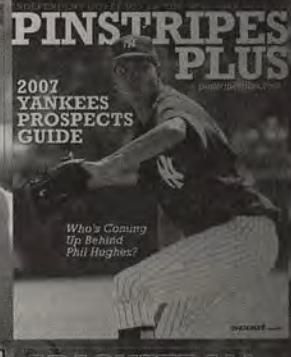
Alabama's upward trend in the pool isn't the only thing that McIlquham expects to continue.

"We're shooting for a top-15 national finish for our men and the top-25 for the women, but we're also looking to keep our reputation as one of the top teams academically," McIlquham said. "Our athletes know that we take what happens in the classroom very seriously and they're really done a nice job in that area."

Alabama's women carried a 3.5 team grade point average last season while the men posted a 3.3, putting among the nation's best. ■







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RECRUITING *By Andrew Bone*

Prep Prospects

A look at out-of-state skill players

The University of Alabama landed the nation's top recruiting class last February. Several of the elite prospects came from within the state's borders, but 13 out-of-state players helped propel the Tide to the top.

The out-of-state talent signed included skill position players--cornerbacks Alonzo Lawrence and Robby Green, wide receiver Chris Jackson, running back Mark Ingram and quarterback Star Jackson.

Alabama has a big advantage over most schools in recruiting out-of-state because the Crimson Tide is one of those very few truly national teams. One factor that is attractive to prospects is playing on television, and no Southern school has been on television as much as Bama.

While it is true that Alabama has been the dominant football program in the South for many decades and has had squads made up primarily of players provided by the high schools of the state of Alabama, the Crimson Tide's very best teams have also had outstanding players from out of state.

Here is a look at some of the top out-of-state skill position players (backs and wide receivers) who have been connected to Alabama in this recruiting season.

RUNNING BACKS

Bama Coach Nick Saban has already picked up one of the best running backs in the country for the class of 2009 in Trent Richardson. The Florida Gators and LSU Tigers continue to recruit the star from Escambia High in Pensacola, Florida. Richardson, a four-star prospect by Scout Media, is 5-11, 225 and has been clocked at 4.5 seconds in the 40-yard dash.

Richardson made a commitment to Alabama at the beginning of the summer. College coaches from across the country are trying to lure the talented running back to their schools, but for now he is holding firm with the Tide.

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Richardson will take all five official visits, including one to Alabama. Other schools in the running for an official visit include LSU, Florida, Florida State, Georgia and Miami. Richardson missed four games of the 2007 season, but still recorded over 1,400 yards.

He took an unofficial visit for the home opener when the Tide faced Tulane. He chose to trip to Tuscaloosa instead of visiting Florida for the Miami game.

"When I walked in the game everyone was cheering for me," Richardson said. "It brightened up my day. Everyone was asking for my autograph. They were yelling 'Trent! Trent! Trent!' and 'Roll Tide!' It's another world up there. It made me feel real good. It really took my mind off the game we lost. I'm still going to take visits, but Alabama is at the top."

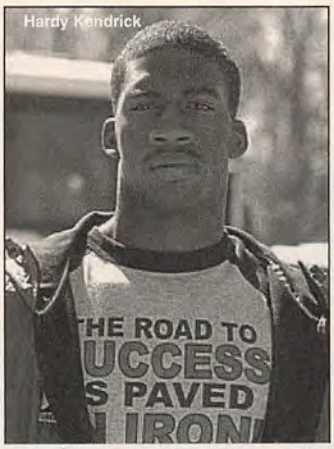
Alabama holds a commitment from Mike Marrow, Scout three-star fullback from Toledo (Ohio) Central Catholic, and may add another outstanding athlete from the Midwest. Ronnie Wingo, Scout four-star running back, is considering Alabama and is expected to take an official visit.

Wingo, 6-1, 212, is at University High in St. Louis, Missouri.

Wingo is being recruited as a athlete by the Tide while other schools are recruiting him as a running back. He prefers to run the ball, but he is open to Bama. He also plans official visits to Arkansas, Illinois, Missouri and Oklahoma.

Wingo rushed for 1,575 yards and 17 touchdowns in 2007.

"Alabama is on the rebound to win national championships," said Wingo. "They had a good recruiting class this past year. The coaches were nice and straightforward. The facilities were nice."



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Eddie Lacy, 6-0, 210, 4.4, from Dutchtown High School in Geismar, Louisiana, is a Scout four-star running back. Lacy spent the summer in school and did not make unofficial visits and has had less attention as a prospect than might have been expected. He has received several scholarship offers, including those from Alabama, FSU and Oklahoma.

Lacy rushed for 1,800 yards and 26 touchdowns in 2007. He was 5A all-state.

Kendrick Hardy, 6-0, 215, is a Scout three-star running back at Lawrence County High School in Monticello, Mississippi. Ranked as one of the top five players in the Magnolia State, Hardy lists favorites as Alabama, Auburn, Mississippi State. Ole Miss and Southern Miss.

His interest in Bama stems from attending a Crimson Tide home game last season. "I have not been over there to talk to their coaches yet, but I did get to go to a game," said Hardy. "They have a good environment."

Hardy had an impressive junior season rushing for more than 2,100 yards and scoring 26 touchdowns. He expects to wait until after the season to make a decision.

De'Antwan Williams, 5-7, 207, 4.5, Woodbridge (Virginia) High School, is a Scout three-star who has been very high on Alabama since the Tide extended an offer. Williams has yet to visit Alabama but hopes to during the season.

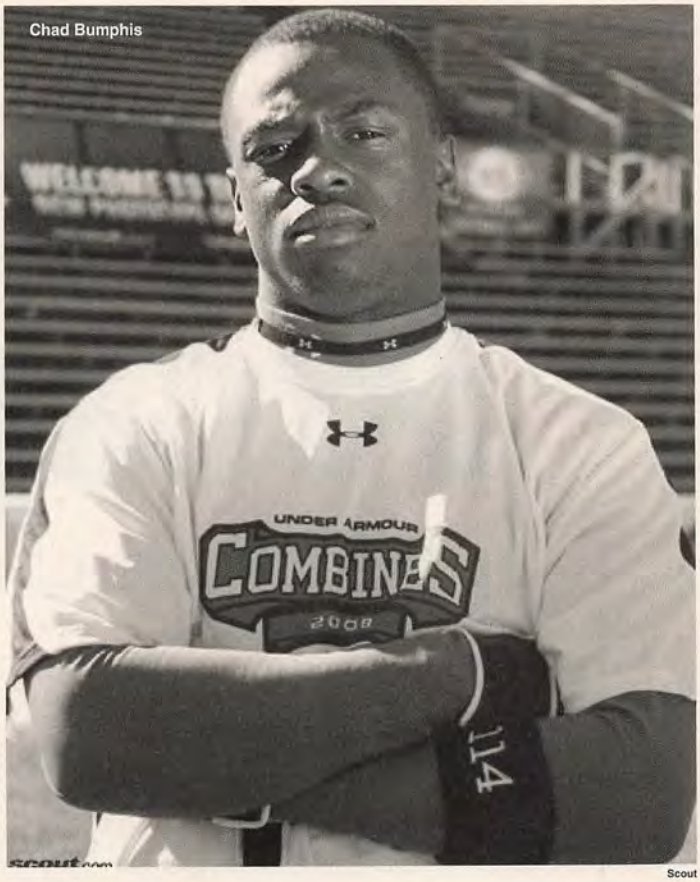
"I was very interested in Alabama before they offered me," said Williams. "Playing time is a big issue for me, and I know Alabama gets who they want. The talent level down there is a lot different than it is here."

Williams also holds offers from Boston College, Maryland, Virginia, Virginia Tech, West Virginia, Maryland, Illinois, Rutgers and Pitt. He rushed for 2,247 yards and 28 touchdowns and was all-state in 2007.

WIDE RECEIVERS

Alabama landed the nation's top receiver in the nation in 2008, Julio Jones. Jones has made an early impact in Tuscaloosa. Alabama hopes to bring in more top receivers after losing 2008 signees Destin Hood and Melvin Ray to professional baseball.

The Tide has one wide receiver commitment, and is considered the leader for five-star Kendall Kelly from Gadsden City. The Bama staff is looking out of state as three or four wide receivers are expected to be in the 2009 signing class.



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Michael Bowman, 6-5, 225, 4.5, Ridgeland High School, Rossville, Georgia, announced in September for Alabama. There were reports that he hoped for an offer from Georgia, which is low on scholarships. He had been considered a heavy lean to the Tide since Bama offered in the spring.

He recorded 27 receptions for 722 yards and 13 touchdowns in 2007.

Bowman is the younger brother of former Oklahoma State All-America wide receiver Aldarius Bowman.

Rueben Randle, 6-3, 195, 4.5, is a Scout five-star and the top ranked player in Louisiana. The Bastrop star has scholarship offers from across the country. Schools that appear in the best shape for an official visit include Alabama, LSU, Georgia, Miami and USC. Randle has taken unofficial visits to all locations, but the home-state school is considered a heavy favorite. Randle has tripped to Tuscaloosa.

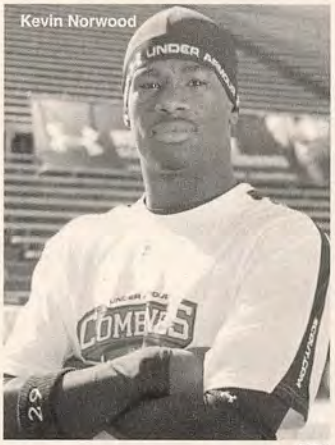
"I like the offense at Alabama," Randle said. "It's a pro-style offense. They showed me everything and made me feel real comfortable. It also helps that I am pretty familiar with Coach Saban."

A decision is likely after Randle takes all five official visits.

He recorded 1,058 yards and 11 touchdowns in 2007. He returned three punts for touchdowns.

Chad Bumphis, 5-10, 180, 4.4, Tupelo, Mississippi, is a Scout four-star who had been expected to make a decision before the start

of the season. He seems to be deciding between Alabama and Mississippi State, but will also take a visit to Florida.


Kevin Norwood

Scout

Bumphis said the Tide and Bulldogs are neck-and-neck. He visited Tuscaloosa for the Tulane game.

"I enjoyed it a lot," Bumphis said. "I got to talk with Coach Saban for a good while. He told me they were looking for receivers because of the ones they lost to baseball, and they had one that didn't qualify. He told me how they could use me."

The talented athlete could play on either side of the ball on the next level including slot receiver or cornerback. Bumphis had 37 catches for 787 yards and 12 touchdowns in 2007.

A little further from Tuscaloosa is Rex Burkhead, 5-11, 195, 4.6, from Plano, Texas. The Scout four-star is a do-it-all athlete who could play a number of positions at the next level. He finished the 2007 season with 1,769 yards rushing and 29 touchdowns. He also had 500 yards receiving and three touchdowns.

He took an unofficial visit to Tuscaloosa in the summer. He holds several scholarship offers including Alabama, Auburn, Cal, Michigan, Nebraska and Texas Tech.

"I like the coaching staff at Alabama," said Burkhead. "I think they are on the rise, especially with Coach Saban being there. They just had a great recruiting class."

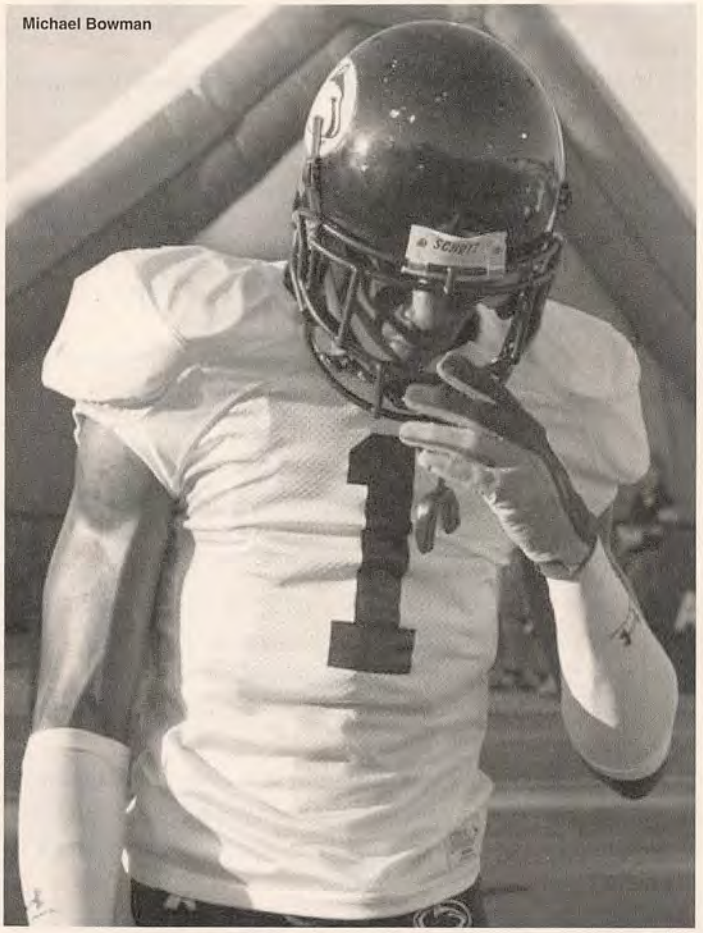
Burkhead is not in any rush to make a decision. "I look for all of the great things that you want in a college--atmosphere and academics," he said. "Of course, academics is the big one. Football is going to end one day."

Stephon Gilmore, 6-2, 181, 4.5, South Pointe High in Rock Hill, South Carolina, is a Scout four-star who has Alabama as a finalist and has scheduled a visit to Tuscaloosa on November 15. Gilmore has also scheduled official visits to South Carolina and Tennessee. Florida and Clemson are likely to receive the remaining two visits. Gilmore does not expect to make a decision until after taking all official visits.

Gilmore could play either side of the ball. He attended Alabama's summer camp where he worked as a cornerback.

"I went there this summer during a camp," said Gilmore. "I was glad I went. I got to talk to Coach Saban, and my mom and dad and whole family got to meet him. He said he liked my size at the cornerback position. I think they're going to be pretty good in the future."

Alabama is considered the leader for Kevin Norwood, 6-3, 180, 4.4, D'Iberville High, Biloxi, Mississippi. The Scout three--star was a standout at Alabama's summer camp, turning in one of the fastest 40-yard dash times. Norwood has been high on the Tide since Bama


Michael Bowman

Scout

offered a scholarship and lists Alabama as the overall favorite. An early decision is expected.

He caught 33 passes for 668 yards and 11 touchdowns in 2007.

"I like Alabama a lot," said Norwood. "They have great facilities. They are really huge. Alabama isn't as far as I first thought it would be. I think the coaches at Alabama are awesome. I just really like their program."

DEFENSIVE BACKS

The Alabama coaching staff does not have any defensive backs higher on the wish list than Dre Kirkpatrick, Scout five-star cornerback from Gadsden City. Kirkpatrick is possibly the Tide's top overall target for the class of 2009.

Alabama has received commitments from Gerald West, Scout three-star cornerback from Mobile Faith Academy, and Rod Woodson, Scout four-star safety from Olive Branch, Mississippi. The coaching staff hopes to add two more cornerbacks and another safety to this class.

Rod Woodson, 5-11, 200, 4.5,committed to Alabama in the summer over scholarship offers from Auburn, Michigan, Mississippi State, Ole Miss and Tennessee. Woodson is a very physical safety who could possibly grow into an outside linebacker. He had a sensational junior season with 148 tackles, three fumbles caused, three fumbles recovered, and three

interceptions. He is very strong with over a 330-pound bench press and has a 41-inch vertical.

Woodson is solid in his commitment to Alabama and does not expect to take other official visits.

"I like how they play defense over there," Woodson said. "They have a great school and good dorms, and all of that. I have been over there three or four times, and I just like it over there."

Darren Myles, 6-2, 180, 4.5, Carver High, Atlanta, is not paying much attention to the recruiting process. The Scout four-star safety is focused on his senior season.

He has received offers from a number of schools, including Alabama, Auburn, Florida, Georgia, Georgia Tech, LSU and Tennessee. Myles expects to travel to Tuscaloosa during the season, and Alabama has a great chance for an official visit.

"I love the weight room and facilities they have," Myles said. "They pretty much have the best facilities I've seen."

Gene Robinson, 5-10, 180, 4.5, Whitehaven High, Memphis, is a Scout three-star safety. He had a great junior season, recording five interceptions. He holds scholarship offers from Alabama, Colorado, Kentucky, Ole Miss, North Carolina and Vanderbilt. The Tide is considered the favorite. Robinson does not have a timetable for a decision.

"I like Alabama lot," said Robinson. "I like how the academic center is by the dorm. I want to major in Engineering. When I wake in the mornings I can just walk across the street. SEC facilities are top-notch."

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Branden Smith, 5-11, 170, 4.28, is considered the fastest football player in Atlanta. The Scout four-star cornerback at Washington High, was clocked at a 10.62 in the 100 meters as a junior and ran a 4.28 40 at the Under Armour/Scout combine at the Georgia Dome.

Smith has received scholarship offers from across the country including one from Alabama. He took an unofficial visit to Tuscaloosa in the summer and expects to return for a home game. The Tide is competing against several schools, including Clemson, Florida, Florida State, Georgia and LSU. Smith expects to wait until National Signing Day to make a decision.

"Alabama is real big on academics," said Smith, "I think that is a good thing. I think Alabama is a real good program. They are doing some real big things over there. I think everything is good."

Eric Gordon, 5-11, 186, 4.5, Nashville Hillsboro Comp, has appeared at the top of Alabama's recruiting board since early spring. Alabama was one of the first schools to offer a scholarship and is in great shape to land the Scout four-star cornerback.

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Gordon is a standout on both sides of the ball, but is recruited mainly as a cornerback. Gordon plans to visit Tennessee, Oklahoma and Miami before making a decision. He recorded 41 catches for 816 yards and 10 touchdowns during his junior season. He had 77 tackles, three interceptions with two returned for touchdowns. He also had kickoff and punt returns for touchdowns.

He attended the Tide's first home game against Tulane and expects to return later in the year.

"The visit was straight," Gordon said. "I loved it. They had a bad game, but everyone goes through that. I know what their program is capable of and what they are going to be capable of. There is so much talent down there." ■

Football Hot List

2009 Alabama Football Prospects as determined by Andrew Bone of 'BAMA Magazine and Scout Media

Name, Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Time	Hometown (High School)
Kenyatta Abernathy, S	6-1	201	4.6	Tuscumbia (Deshler)
Jerrod Askew, LB	6-0	230	4.55	Chesapeake, Va. (Oscar F. Smith)
Jonathan Atchison, SLB	6-3	215	4.6	Atlanta (Douglass)
Chris Bonds, DE	6-4	275	4.8	Columbia, S.C. (Richland NE)
*Michael Bowman, WR	6-5	220	4.6	Rossville, Ga. (Ridgeland)
Jheranie Boyd, WR	6-3	185	4.45	Gastonia, N.C. (Ashbrook)
Alex Buford, S	5-11	175	4.5	Thomasville
Chad Bumphis, WR	5-10	180	4.4	Tupelo, Miss.
Rex Burkhead, S	5-11	196	4.6	Plano, Texas
Montrell Conner, RB	6-1	210	4.5	Monroe, La. (Ouachita Parish)
Desmond Dennis, RB	5-11	185	4.5	Atlanta (Carver)
*Quinton Dial, DT	605	310	5.1	Pinson (Clay-Chalkville)
Craig Drummond, DE	6-5	260	N/A	Chicago (Morgan Park)
Jonathan Edwards, CB	5-9	185	4.5	Tuscaloosa (Central)
Johnnie Farms, OG	6-2	280	N/A	Perry, Ga.
Quan Fletcher, LB	6-1	240	4.7	Miami (Dr. Krop)
*D.J. Fluker, DE	6-6	327	4.9	Foley
Chuck Franks, SLB	6-4	215	4.8	Fayette (Fayette County)
Stephon Gilmore, S	6-0	180	4.5	Rock Hill, S.C. (South Pointe)
Eric Gordon, CB	5-11	186	4.4	Nashville (Hillsboro)
A.J. Graham, QB	6-3	195	4.6	Tallahassee (Godby)
Alvin Hines, S	6-0	195	4.5	Pelham
Mardrecas Hood, WR	6-3	180	4.5	Reform (Pickens Co.)
*Nico Johnson, LB	6-2	230	4.6	Andalusia
Jarvis Jones, LB	6-3	205	4.55	Columbus, Ga. (Carver)
Kendall Kelly, WR	6-4	205	4.5	Gadsden (Gadsden City)
Greg King, LB	6-3	205	N/A	Memphis (Melrose)
Dre Kirkpatrick, CB	6-3	180	4.5	Gadsden (Gadsden City)
Drew Little, QB	6-5	240	N/A	McDonough, Ga. (Henry Co.)
Austin Long, OT	6-5	270	N/A	Memphis (Briarcrest Ch.)
*A.J. McCarron, QB	6-4	180	4.8	Mobile (St. Paul's)
Eric McDaniel, DT	6-1	297	5.0	Calhoun, Ga.
*Darius McKeller, OT	6-6	295	N/A	Jonesboro, Ga.
*Mike Marrow, FB	6-1	235	4.7	New Albany, Ohio
*William Ming, DE	6-4	230	4.7	Athens
Barkevious Mingo, LB	6-4	200	4.6	West Monroe, La.
Brandon Moore, OT	6-5	310	N/A	Montgomery (Carver)
Clint Moseley, QB	6-4	196	4.7	Leroy
Darren Myles, S	6-2	180	4.5	Atlanta (Carver)
Kevin Norwood, WR	6-3	180	4.5	Biloxi, Miss. (D'Iberville)
*Anthony Orr, DE	6-4	261	4.8	Harvest (Sparkman)
Taikwon Paige, CB	6-0	170	4.4	Milledgeville, Ga. (Ga Military)
Tana Patrick, LB	6-4	220	4.6	Stevenson (North Jackson)
Jamal Patterson, WR	6-2	189	4.56	McDonough, Ga. (Henry Co.)
Rueben Randle, WR	6-3	195	4.5	Bastrop, La.
*Trent Richardson, RB	5-11	210	4.5	Pensacola (Escambia)
Gene Robinson, S	5-10	180	4.5	Memphis (Whitehaven)
Darrington Sentimore, DT	6-2	266	4.8	Destrehan, La.
Terry Shankle, CB	6-0	180	4.5	Norwood, N.C. (So. Stanley)
Tim Simon, RB	6-2	200	4.5	Cordova
Charles Skiddoway, OT	6-6	305	5.3	Eugene, Ore. (South Eugene)
Branden Smith, CB	6-0	180	4.4	Atlanta (Washington)
*Anthony Steen, OG	6-4	295	N/A	Clarksdale, Miss. (Lee Acad.)
Frankie Telfort, LB	5-11	197	4.55	Miami (Gulliver Prep)
Jamar Travis, DT	6-1	290	N/A	East Brewton (W.S. Neal)
*Chance Warmack, OG	6-4	230	N/A	Atlanta (Westlake)
Quinten Washington, OG	6-4	322	N/A	St. Stephen, S.C. (Timberland)
*Gerald West, CB	5-10	170	4.45	Mobile (Davidson)
De'Antwan Williams, RB	5-7	207	4.5	Woodbridge, Va.
*Kellen Williams, OT	6-5	288	N/A	Snellville, Ga. (Brookwood)
Ronnie Wingo, RB	6-1	215	4.6	St. Louis, Mo. (University)
*Rod Woodson, S	5-11	200	4.5	Olive Branch, Miss.

* Committed to Alabama

HISTORY *By A.P. Steadham*

Where Are They Now?

Lessons learned in football guide Legg's life

Real estate development requires shrewd analysis of relevant data, market trends and cash flow to anticipate the accompanying successful location of shopping centers. The mandatory task of extrapolating the value of pertinent information requires not only discipline but the knowledge of foresight. Former Alabama strong safety, Murray Legg, resorted to similar pre-game tactics as the defensive secondary signal caller for the 1978 national championship team. Strategies were formulated during those long hours of film session under the tutelage of his position coach, Bill "Brother" Oliver.

As Vice-President, Commercial Division, with The Mitchell Company of Mobile, Legg's predisposed skills of analysis and anticipation are fully utilized these days. Entering the profession in early 1992, he has cultivated contacts allowing him to develop commercial real estate ventures across the southeast. His main emphasis is retail development ranging from shopping centers anchored by companies such as Target, Wal-Mart, Kroger's or Publix to neighborhood strip centers with a grocery anchor, shops and out parcels. Success in the real estate business is derived from trusting relationships and performing satisfactorily for the tenants, according to Legg.

The cumulative years of experience ascertaining markets provides him a competitive edge. "I've been doing this so long that when I research a market, I can quickly identify the sites a Wal-Mart or a Publix would desire," the former All-Southeastern Conference player said. Selection of a suitable location in conjunction with the proximity of the tenant's current stores is considered so as not to cannibalize the market by negatively affecting the sales of a nearby property. A clear understanding of a company's parameters provides an advantage the next time they are searching for property. "Having good relationships with these tenants hopefully every now and then you get a nod of where they are looking in an area," said Legg. "When it comes to Wal-Mart I get to develop them but I also broker for them in Florida. They give me leads on where they want to go."

Murray Legg (19) was part of famous... national championship goalline stand in Sugar Bowl win over Penn State to win 1978 national championship

Bryant Museum

In May of 2002, Legg decided after consultation and funding from some associates to form his own company, Legg Development Partners, LLC. He has the best of both worlds as he is able to branch out with his own projects while continuing his role with the gulf coast based real estate company.

Quarterbacking Homewood High School to the 1974 4A state championship, Legg was coached by former Auburn wide receiver and track star, Alvin Bresler. He was raised around athletics as his father Bill was the high school football, basketball and baseball coach at Shades Valley where coincidentally one of his star performers was Bresler.

"He was like having a coach on the field," said Bressler. " He had trump authority."

Indoctrinated to Alabama football by his grandfather, Lee Legg, a season ticket holder who carried him to games at the age of five, he always dreamed of donning a crimson jersey. Surprisingly, Murray briefly considered attending Auburn to become a veterinarian. "My granddaddy would have disowned me if I went to Auburn," Legg chuckled.

Murray's father, Bill, continues as one of the state's most influential figures in sports and longtime executive director of the famed Alabama Sports Hall of Fame and Museum.

Murray has rarely viewed replays of the dramatic Sugar Bowl goal line stand but vividly recalls the circumstances which made his teammate Don McNeal famous. On second down at the six yard line, Scott Fitzkee, normally Penn State's wide receiver lined up inside at right tight end. Sensing the formation Legg moved a yard inside the receiver's shoulder and hand signaled cornerback McNeal for man-to-man coverage. "I just knew because I was going to outsmart everybody and they were going to cross the tight ends and pick me off with the other big tight end and they would throw to Fitzkee in the corner of the end zone. In my head I could see the picture played out and I'm going to duck behind the guy. I'm going to shoot up and intercept the ball on the four and I'm going to go ninety-six yards for a touchdown."

Murray Legg

University of Alabama

The ensuing sequence proved otherwise as Legg explained. "When they snapped the ball he (Fitzkee) makes a straight line shot for the sideline. So by alignment I'm three yards inside his outside shoulder. When he takes off, he and I are close in speed but I couldn't catch him. When he caught that ball I dove to try to grab his feet but missed. I just knew he was going to score. Don (McNeal) came up and that's where you have faith in each other. Don was such a fantastic player. He saw the play out of the corner of his eye and came off his man to make the tackle."

The subsequent third and fourth down huddle resurrected the anguish from the previous year's finish when fifth-ranked Notre Dame vaulted number two Alabama in the final AP and UPI polls to win the 1977 national championship. "I've always said there is someone in South Bend wearing my ring," Legg said. Coach

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Bryant figuratively entered the huddle as the team reflected on the significance of the moment, especially for the seniors. "When you played at Alabama back then, losing was never a thought you had in your mind," said Legg. "Nobody has worked as hard as we have these last four years. They are not going to score. This is what we worked for and why we came to Alabama. This is our time. We knew how good Penn State was but the one constant for Alabama teams back then was we did not believe that any school in the country worked as hard as we did. The coaches wouldn't let us think otherwise because they worked us so hard."

Legg's three-year Alabama coaching career which he began as a graduate assistant in 1980 before being named full-time in 1981 had an inauspicious beginning as his first game was almost his last. During the season-opening game against Georgia Tech, Legg suggested a substitution to defensive backfield coach Louis Campbell in the booth and proceeded to act without the consent of Coach Bryant. Immediately he heard the growling disapproval of his mentor questioning which coach acted autonomously.

"Why is Coach Bryant getting so upset?" Legg asked Campbell. "You mean you didn't go ask him first?" Campbell replied. His coaching colleagues had set him up to incur the wrath of Coach Bryant.

Legg furiously began tugging his trailing headset wire as far as he could muster in the opposite direction of the pursuing taskmaster. "Coach Bryant was screaming repeatedly, 'Who sent him in?' All of a sudden I hear Coach (Jim) Goosetree say, 'Coach Legg did it, Coach Bryant.' I hear this voice in my ear say don't look now but here he comes. He (Bryant) puts that giant hand on my shoulder and whips me around and said 'Who do you think you are you? Nobody substitutes here but me. I ought to fire you. You are fired.'

"He turned around and walked off."

Mystified by the events, Legg was inundated with laughter erupting in his headset from all the coaches in the booth. "Y'all quit laughing I just got fired," Legg pleaded. "Louis Campbell said, 'Welcome to the staff. We've all been fired at least four times. Don't worry about it. Just be at the meeting tomorrow.'"

Two seasons removed from the sideline folly, Bryant entrusted Legg with the honor and responsibility of the scouting report for the Liberty Bowl swan song versus Illinois.

Current Alabama Strength and Conditioning Coach Rocky Colburn's propensity for concussions prompted Legg asking Bryant to substitute after a jarring tackle left the former safety staggering to the opponent's huddle in the first quarter.

Legg said he went to Bryant and said, "I have to get Rocky out of the game. He's got a concussion. Is it okay if I make a change?"

Legg continued, "He put his arm around me and said, 'Murray, this is your game. Don't ask me again. Just substitute.'"

In Legg's mind, the act of relinquishing substitution duty punctuated the solemn end of hsi coach's career.

Family plays a significant role in his Legg's life. "I like to spend time with my children," he said. " That's something that's very dear to me." When his two sons were young, they were his constant companions on hunting expeditions. Proud father Legg has two sons from his first marriage attending The Capstone. Murray, his namesake, is a senior and Matt, a junior, both played junior college baseball. Murray played at Gadsden State and Matt for Snead State. Jordan, his fifth-grade daughter with current wife Kim, is a black belt in karate and an ice skater. The Legg family resides in Chelsea, 25 miles southeast of Birmingham.

Legg's leisure time is being outdoors. During the first week in November for the past six years, he's ventured to the mountains of Colorado to hunt for elk and mule deer. He annually travels to South Dakota in search of pheasant. Whether he successfully lands the intended game is not mandatory as the serenity of walking in the woods is the sanctuary he seeks from telephones and business obligations. Just hiking in the woods provides an immense amount of joy. Even though he makes an occasional excursion he concedes, "I just don't like to be away from my family that long."

When Legg walked away from Alabama athletics after having played, coached for three years and been part of the administration for four years, he vowed to dispel a stereotypical myth. "This has been an interesting part of my life," he said. "It's been some of the best times I've had and probably ever will have. But I didn't want people to associate me with some athlete who couldn't do anything but live in the past."

Although proud of his football accomplishments, he refrained from divulging his athletic exploits even to his young sons. (A neighbor revealed Legg's accomplishments to the boys.) Acknowledging some doors opening because of his athletics background, he said, "I was starting the next chapter in my life. I wanted people to respect me for either what I did in business, in sales or whatever I was doing and not because I happened to play on a national championship football team."

Like all Alabama players who have been a part of national championship teams, Legg has a ring to symbolize the feat. But it means more to him that just memories of past glory. For Legg, the ring serves "as a reminder to work harder."

One person who recognized his consistent earnest efforts was Coach Oliver as he reflected on Legg's daily practice habits. "A lot of players take a day off now and then," said Oliver. "Murray came to practice and prepared himself every day to the best of his ability. He enjoyed every minute of it while he was doing it. That attitude rubbed off on the other guys. He was enthusiastic."

One of Coach Bryant's maxims profoundly influenced Legg. Legg said, "Coach Bryant told us there are a lot of people who are bigger, faster, stronger. But he told us we didn't have to let anyone outwork us. I think that's been the model for me. I'm not the most talented or most creative, but God's blessed me with the good life. I've got three beautiful children and a lovely wife. I'm very fortunate."

He attributes much of his present circumstances to athletics, Coach Bryant and the other outstanding coaches he had during his entire career. "Athletics is an incredible way to learn a lot of life's lessons," he said. "Be courteous when you win, don't be boastful. Play by the rules. Do things the right way. Work hard. All these things you're being taught come back later in life when you're in situations that are tough."

Murray Legg was a champion as a member of the Crimson Tide football team and remains committed to the lofty goal of being a winner in life. ■

EDITOR'S NOTE: Members of the 1978 Alabama national championship team will have a 30-year reunion in Tuscaloosa in conjunction with this year's Arkansas State game on November 1.

SPORTSNOTES *By 'Bama Staff*

'BAMA Scorecard

Notebooking Crimson Tide Sports

Not Half Bad

It couldn't last because of the in-fighting, but early in the season five Southeastern Conference teams were ranked among the top ten teams in the nation in the prestigious Associated Press college football poll. It was just a matter of time before games between ranked SEC teams would drop some out of the top ten, but for a week at least history was made.

Never in the AP poll, which was begun in 1933, had one conference placed five teams in the top ten.

Following the third week of the season the AP poll had Georgia third, Florida fourth, LSU sixth, Alabama ninth and Auburn tenth.

The Pros Know

The Southeastern Conference placed 259 of its former players on the 2008 National Football League opening weekend active rosters, leading all NCAA conferences.

The SEC had five of the top 12 schools on NFL opening day rosters. Georgia was the SEC's leading squad and was third overall with 36 of its former players listed on NFL rosters, followed by LSU with 35, Tennessee at 34, Florida with 30 and Auburn with 27.

Miami led all schools with 44 former players on NFL rosters, followed by Florida State with 37.

Following the SEC, the ACC had 254 of its players on active rosters, followed by the Big Ten with 227, Pac-10 with 178, Big 12 with 170 and the Big East with 87.

The SEC has led the nation in the number of players on opening weekend rosters since 2001.

The 12 SEC schools were in the top 64 among all colleges. Alabama was sixth in the SEC with 18, followed by Arkansas and Mississippi State with 16 each, South Carolina with 15, Ole Miss at 14, Vanderbilt with 10 and Kentucky with eight.

The NFL Kickoff Weekend numbers were furnished by the National Football League.

Missing For Now

Alabama men's basketball signee Tony Mitchell did not enroll for the fall semester because he had not met NCAA academic requirements for initial eligibility. Mitchell, a 6-6 forward from Swainsboro, Georgia, reportedly had sufficient core subjects and grade point average and had made a qualifying standardized test score, but did not succeed on his graduation examination.

Reports are that Mitchell is in a private school in Birmingham attempting to gain eligibility.

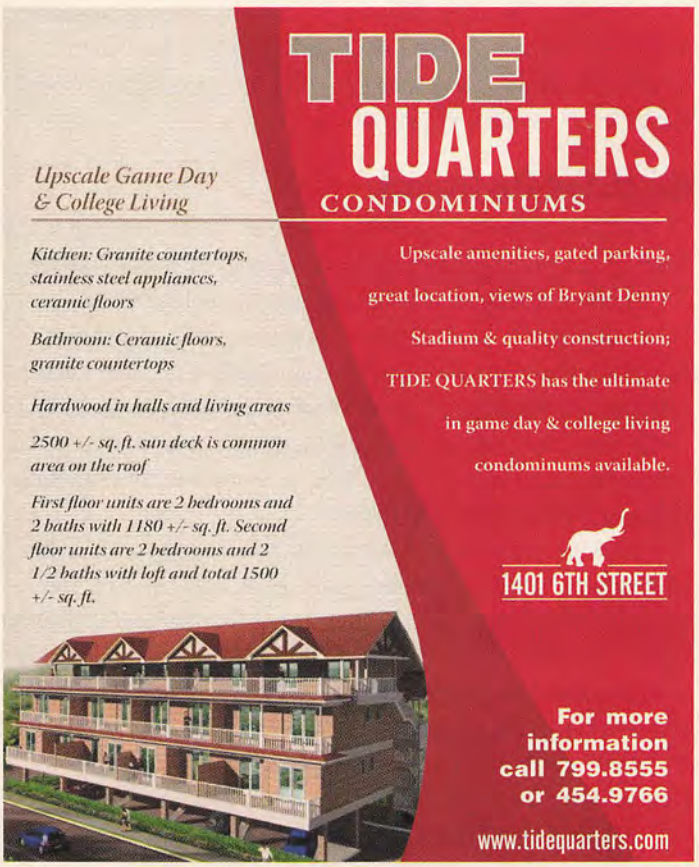
In a written statement, Alabama Coach Mark Gottfried said, "Tony Mitchell will not be enrolled at Alabama during the fall semester. However, we do expect Tony to earn admission to The University of Alabama and join our basketball program at some point."

Mitchell was rated as one of the top small forwards in the nation by Scout Media. Mitchell was the 2008 Georgia Class AA Player of the Year. He averaged 19 points and eight rebounds per game as a senior.

Mitchell also issued a written statement: "Although I am very disappointed that I was unable to be admitted, I will work as hard as I can to make sure that I am able to earn a spot at The University of Alabama as soon as possible."

That's Worth Some Euros

Kenny Walker, a center who helped Alabama win the 2002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Southeastern Conference basketball regular season championship, was named the MVP of the Eurobasket Summer League in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Walker finished the 2008 season in the Czech Republic playing for Geofin Novy Jicin, a team that advanced to the Mattoni NBL Finals. Walker, who played at Wolfson High School in Jacksonville, Florida, before playing four years and graduating from The University of Alabama, will return to the Czech Republic to play again this season. He will play in the Mattoni NBL and FIBA Central European Basketball League.

Walker's summer league play was in Salt Lake City and ran concurrently with the NBA's Rocky Mountain Revue. Former Tide player and Birmingham native Emmett Thomas also participated. Walker played for the league champions, Team Sevilla, which was made up of Delta Jammers Play2Win players. Walker had a key block late in the championship game against Team Munich to preserve the win and give the championship to Team Sevilla.

An Academic All-SEC player as well as a four-year starter for the Crimson Tide, he played on back-to-back NCAA tournament teams for Alabama in 2002 and 2003 and helped Alabama advance to the NIT Championship game in 2001, his sophomore season. His senior season Alabama received the school's first number one national ranking, a spot it held for two weeks in December of 2002.

Walker has been playing basketball professionally since graduating from Alabama in May 2003. He led his league in Poland in blocked shots in 2007 playing for Polonia and was MVP in the Kosovo Finals, playing for Mabetex Prishtine in 2005 while leading Kosovo to the Super League championship. In 2004 he was All-Swedish league playing in Sallen, Sweden and was selected for and played in the Swedish league's all-star game.

Gottfried On Board

Alabama Basketball Coach Mark Gottfried has been elected to the board of directors of the National Association of Basketball Coaches.

"I view this as an honor and certainly a privilege," said Gottfried who is in his 11th season at Alabama and has coached his alma mater to the 2002 Southeastern Conference championship and the 2004 NCAA Elite 8, among other program successes. "I told (NABC Executive Director) Jim Haney that I will treat it as such. I'm very excited about my opportunity to serve and want to contribute to our profession in any way possible."

Gottfried, the 2002 SEC Coach of the Year, has been active in the NABC, serving on rules committees and other areas in the past. The veteran coach was head coach at Murray State for three seasons prior to taking the Alabama job in March of 1998. He was an assistant coach at UCLA for seven seasons, including its 1995 NCAA Championship season.

Gottfried is also on the John Wooden Award Board of Governors.

Also named as a new member of the NABC board is South Carolina State Coach Tim Carter.

"We are very pleased and fortunate to have Tim Carter and Mark Gottfried join our board of directors," said NABC President Tubby Smith of the University of Minnesota in a release. "Both have been strong advocates for our game and I'm looking forward to working with them."

And LeBlanc Makes 60

When former Alabama baseball star Wade LeBlanc made his Major League pitching debut in early September, he became the 60th former Crimson Tider to reach the Majors. LeBlanc pitched for the San Diego Padres and made his debut on September 3 against the Los Angeles Dodgers in Dodger Stadium.

LeBlanc was an All-America and 2004 National Freshman of the Year as a Bama player.

He was the third former Alabama player to make his Major League debut in the 2008 season. His former teammates, David Robertson (New York Yankees) and Tommy Hunter (Texas Rangers) had earlier appearances.

All three pitched for the Crimson Tide during the 2006 SEC Championship season, forming one of the best pitching staffs in school history. The trio posted a combined 25-8 (.758) with 11 saves as Alabama won its 25th overall conference baseball championship and league-leading 14th SEC Championship.

Seven former Alabama players played Major League baseball this season, which is believed to be the most in school history. The Tide's list of 2008 Major Leaguers includes Lance Cormier (Baltimore Orioles), Hunter (Texas Rangers), LeBlanc (San Diego), Andy Phillips (Cincinnati Reds and New York Mets), Paul Phillips (Chicago White Sox), Robertson (New York Yankees) and Taylor Tankersley (Florida Marlins).

Alabama Coach Jim Wells has now sent 10 former Tide players to the Majors. Wells' other Major League players includes Jeremy Brown, Cormier, Hunter, LeBlanc, Dustan Mohr, Andy Phillips, Paul Phillips, Robertson, Tankersley and Tim Young.

Top Prospect

Alabama junior baseball player Del Howell was named the number one overall prospect in the Texas Collegiate League this summer, according to PGcrosschecker.com, in a survey of professional scouts and summer league coaches.

Howell pitched this summer for the McKinney (Texas) Marshals and earned all-star accolades after helping the Marshals win the TCL regular season and post-season championship.

In 14 games, Howell was 2-2 with four saves and a 2.41 ERA. The Tuscaloosa native was third in the league in saves (4), third in the league in strikeouts (47) and fifth in ERA (2.41). He worked 33 2/3 innings and allowed nine earned runs and 23 hits, with 19 walks and 47 strikeouts. He held opponents to a .188 batting average and was named to the TCL All-Star team.

In his first two seasons at UA, Howell has made eight appearances on the mound with three starts. He is 1-1 with an 8.14 ERA. His best outing for the Crimson Tide came in the 2008 SEC Tournament, where

he allowed three runs and seven hits in 6 2/3 innings in his first career post-season start in a win over Kentucky at Regions Park.

Short Wait

There wasn't a lot of build-up to Alabama Volleyball Coach Judy Green's 600th career head coaching victory. On August 30, Bama took a 3-0 win over Nicholls State in a volleyball match at Bama. That was Green's 599th win. A few hours later the Tide was a 3-1 winner over Iowa for number 600.

First Victory

New Alabama Soccer Coach Todd Bramble didn't take long to get his first Crimson Tide coaching victory. Bama opened the home season with a 3-0 victory over Jacksonville State.

New Assistant

Victor Houston, assistant coach at Iowa the last four years, has been named an assistant coach for the Alabama men's track and field team. Houston replaced Rod Tiffin, who was named head coach at Samford University.

Houston will oversee the field events and multi-events for Coach Harvey Glance's Crimson Tide.

"Victor is a perfect fit for our program," Glance said. "He has produced All-Americas in the field events as well as the multi events. When our position opened up this fall, to me it was a no brainer. He knew my philosophy and he was a former athlete of mine and I think he brings a lot to the table as far as bringing a competitive spirit and knowing what it takes to compete in the SEC."

Houston was a very successful athlete at the collegiate level as well as in international competition. He competed at the 1996 and 2000 Summer Olympics for his home country Barbados. Houston competed for Auburn where he earned the 1996 SEC individual championship in the long jump and the 1996 NCAA decathlon title as well as four All-America honors. He was also a member of the 1997 SEC 4x100 meter championship.

Houston began his coaching career at UTEP where his athletes garnered five WAC individual championships and five All-America honors. While with the Hawkeyes, Houston's teams produced four Big Ten individual champions and seven All-Americas.

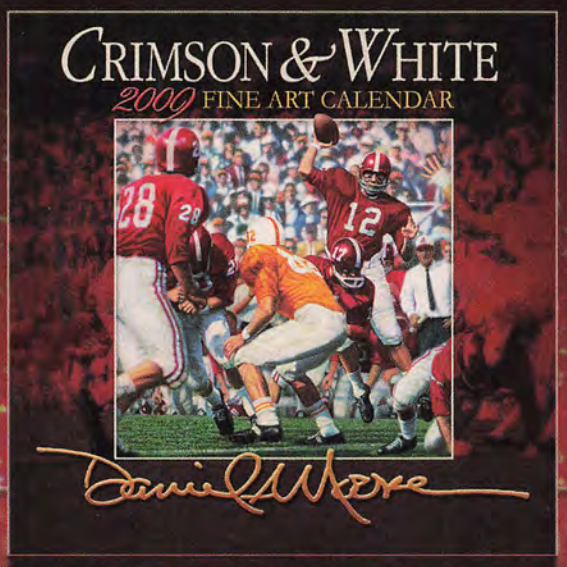
Houston inherits All-SEC high jumper Tyler Boswell and Tim Grier who was a regional qualifier in three events in 2007.

Still In High Regard

Last season the Alabama men's golf team of Coach Jay Seawell was among the nation's best, ranked number one for much of the year and winner of six championships, including the SEC tournament. But there are a lot of top names missing from that team. Graduation hit the Crimson Tide heavily, taking 1st Team PING

Continued on page 46

NEW FOR THE SEASON



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2008-09 Alabama Fall Sports Schedules

Football

DATE	OPPONENT	SITE	SERIES RECORD
Aug. 30	Clemson	Atlanta	UofA leads 11-3
Sept. 6	Tulane	Tuscaloosa	UofA leads 26-11-3
Sept. 13	Western Kentucky	Tuscaloosa	First Meeting
Sept. 20	Arkansas	Fayetteville	UofA leads 11-7-0
Sept. 27	Georgia	Athens	UofA leads 35-25-4
Oct. 4	Kentucky	Tuscaloosa	UofA leads 33-2-1
Oct. 18	Ole Miss	Tuscaloosa	UofA leads 44-9-2
Oct. 25	Tennessee	Knoxville	UofA leads 45-38-7
Nov. 1	Arkansas State	Tuscaloosa (Homecoming)	UofA leads 1-0-0
Nov. 8	LSU	Baton Rouge	UofA leads 43-23-5
Nov. 15	Mississippi State	Tuscaloosa	UofA leads 72-17-3
Nov. 29	Auburn	Tuscaloosa	UofA leads 38-33-1
Dec. 6	SEC Championship	Atlanta	2 wins, 3 losses

Volleyball

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Aug. 29	Western Kentucky	7:00
Aug. 30	Nicholls State	1:30
Aug. 30	Iowa	7:30
Sept. 5-6	@ Miami Invitational (Alabama, Miami, Virginia Commonwealth)	
Sept. 12-13	Hampton Inn Bama Bash	
Sept. 12	Samford	1:30
Sept. 12	South Florida	7:00
Sept. 13	Murray State	1:30
Sept. 19	@ Kentucky	7:00
Sept. 21	@ Tennessee	1:30
Sept. 26	Auburn	7:00
Oct. 3	Florida	7:00
Oct. 5	South Carolina	1:30
Oct. 10	@ Arkansas	7:00
Oct. 12	@ Ole Miss	1:30
Oct. 17	Georgia	7:00
Oct. 19	LSU	1:30
Oct. 24	Tennessee	7:00
Oct. 26	Kentucky	1:30
Oct. 29	@ Mississippi State	7:00
Nov. 2	@ Auburn	1:30
Nov. 7	@ LSU	7:00
Nov. 9	@ Georgia	1:30
Nov. 14	Ole Miss	7:00
Nov. 16	Arkansas	1:30
Nov. 21	@ South Carolina	7:00
Nov. 23	@ Florida	1:30
Nov. 28	Mississippi State	7:00

Soccer

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Aug. 16	Jackson State (Exh)	5:00
Aug. 29	@ Memphis	7:00
Aug. 31	Jacksonville State	TBD
Sept. 5	@ Cal State-Fullerton	7:30
Sept. 7	@ Southern Cal	3:00
Sept. 12	Samford	7:30
Sept. 14	Wright State	2:30
Sept. 19	Tennessee-Chattanooga	7:30
Sept. 21	Mississippi Valley State	2:30
Sept. 26	@ Vanderbilt	6:00
Sept. 28	@ Kentucky	11:00
Oct. 3	Mississippi State	7:00
Oct. 5	Ole Miss	1:00
Oct. 10	@ Arkansas	7:00
Oct. 12	@ LSU	1:00
Oct. 17	South Carolina	7:00
Oct. 19	Florida	1:00
Oct. 23	@ Tennessee	5:00
Oct. 26	Georgia	1:00
Oct. 31	@ Auburn	7:00
Nov. 5-9	SEC Tournament @ Orange Beach	

Men's Cross Country

DATE	EVENT
Sept. 5	Tennessee-Chattanooga Powerade
Sept., 20	CRIMSON CLASSIC
Oct. 4	Dellinger @ Eugene, Ore., OR Auburn Invitational
Oct. 18	Pre-NCAA @ Terre Haute, Ind.
Nov. 3	SEC Championships @ Starkville
Nov. 15	NCAA Regional @ Knoxville
Nov. 24	NCAA Championships @ Terre Haute

Women's Cross Country

DATE	EVENT
Sept. 5	Belmont Opener @ Nashville
Sept., 20	CRIMSON CLASSIC
Sept. 27	Loyola Lakefront @ Chicago
Oct. 11	Chile Pepper @ Fayetteville
Oct. 27	SEC Championships @ Starkville
Nov. 15	NCAA Regional @ Knoxville
Nov. 24	NCAA Championships @ Terre Haute

2008-09 Alabama Winter Sports Schedules

Women's Track & Field

DATE	EVENT
Jan. 9-10	@ Clemson Invitational
Jan. 31	@ Nebraska Invitational
Feb. 6-7	@ Kentucky Invitational
Feb. 13-14	@ Arkansas Invitational
Feb. 27-March 1	SEC Championships @ Lexington, Ky.
March 13-14	NCAA Championships @ College Station, Texas

(Men's Track & Field schedule not available)
All times central

Men's and Women's Swimming & Diving

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Sept. 27	Delta State (M&W) & Vanderbilt (W)	1:00
Oct. 11	@ FSU	Noon
Oct. 24	@ SMU Classic (W)	6:00
Nov. 7	@ LSU	3:00
Nov. 8	Centenary & UNO @ New Orleans	11:00
Nov. 14	Western Kentucky	3:00
Nov. 20	@ Georgia Tech diving	TBA
Nov. 21	Auburn	All Day
Dec. 4	US Short @ Atlanta	All Day
Dec. 18	@ Auburn diving	TBA
Jan. 3	@ Tennessee diving	TBA
Jan. 17	@ Kentucky	1:00
Jan. 31	South Carolina & Georgia	1:00
Feb. 18	SEC Championships @ Auburn	All Day
Feb. 28	@ Georgia Invite	All Day
March 8	@ Auburn Invite	All Day
March 13	NCAA Zone Diving, Knoxville	
March 26	NCAA Championships @ College Station, Texas	

Gymnastics

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Jan. 9	@ Auburn	7:00
Jan. 16	Kentucky	7:30
Jan. 23	@ Georgia	6:30
Jan. 27	@ Arkansas	7:00
Feb. 6	Denver	7:30
Feb. 13	LSU	7:30
Feb. 20	@ Florida	6:00
Feb. 27	Auburn	7:30
March 1	Penn State & Ohio State @ Penn State	1:00
March 6	Stanford	7:30
March 13	North Carolina & Oklahoma	7:30
March 21	SEC Championships @ Nashville	4:00
April 4	NCAA Regionals	6:00
April 16-18	NCAA Championships @ Lincoln, Neb.	

Men's Basketball

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Nov. 2	Crimson-White Exh.	4:00
Nov. 6	Faulkner Exh.	7:00
Nov. 13	Belhaven Exh.	7:00
Nov. 16	Mercer	6:00
Nov. 19	Florida A&M	8:00 (CSS)
Nov. 24-26	Maui Invitational	
Nov. 24	Oregon	11:00
Nov. 25	North Carolina or Chalminade	TBA
Nov. 26	Texas, St. Joseph's, Notre Dame or Indiana	TBA
Dec. 2	Alabama A&M	7:00
Dec. 6	Louisiana-Lafayette	6:00
Dec. 13	Texas A&M	7:00 (CSS)
Dec. 17	Tennessee State	7:00 (CSS)
Dec. 22	Chattanooga	7:00
Dec. 28	Yale	6:00
Dec. 30	Quincy	7:00
Jan. 3	Georgia Tech	2:00 (FoxS)
Jan. 6	@ Clemson	8:00 (FoxS)
Jan. 11	LSU	12:30 or 3:00 (Raycom)
Jan. 14	@ Mississippi State	7:00
Jan. 17	@ Auburn	1:00
Jan. 21	Ole Miss	7:00
Jan. 24	Kentucky	2:00 (Raycom)
Jan. 29	@ Arkansas	8:00 (ESPN)
Jan. 31	Georgia	6:00 (FoxS)
Feb. 5	@ Vanderbilt	6:00 (ESPN)
Feb. 8	@ LSU	Noon (Raycom)
Feb. 14	South Carolina	2:00 (Raycom)
Feb. 18	@ Florida	6:00
Feb. 21	Mississippi State	2:00 (Raycom)
Feb. 25	Arkansas	7:00
Feb. 28	@ Ole Miss	3:00 (Raycom)
March 3	Auburn	8:00 (ESPN)
March 8	@ Tennessee	11:00 (CBS)
March 12-15	SEC Tournament @ Tampa, Fla.	

Women's Basketball

DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Nov. 8	West Alabama	TBA
Nov. 14	Centenary	TBA
Nov. 18	Samford	TBA
Nov. 22	@ Hampton	TBA
Nov. 25	Alabama State	TBA
Nov. 28-29	@ Nuggett Classic, Reno, Nev.	
Dec. 3	UCF	TBA
Dec. 7	Sam Houston State	TBA
Dec. 14	@ MTSU	TBA
Dec. 17	Florida A&M	
Dec. 22	Austin Peay	TBA
Dec. 29-30	Tide Holiday Classic	
Dec. 29	Belmont	TBA
Dec. 30	Ball State or Richmond	TBA
Jan. 3	@ SE Louisiana	TBA
Jan. 8	Vanderbilt	7:00
Jan. 11	@ LSU	2:00
Jan. 15	Kentucky	TBA
Jan. 18	@ Ole Miss	2:00
Jan. 22	@ Auburn	8:00
Jan. 25	Georgia	2:00
Feb. 1	@ Vanderbilt	2:00
Feb. 5	Florida	TBA
Feb. 8	Auburn	2:00
Feb. 12	@ Tennessee	6:00
Feb. 15	@ South Carolina	2:00
Feb. 19	Ole Miss	6:00
Feb. 22	@ Arkansas	2:00
March 1	Mississippi State	TBA
March 5-8	SEC Tournament@ North Little Rock, Ark.	

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'Bama Scorecard

'Continued on page 43

All-American Michael Thompson, All-SEC golfers Mark Harrell and Gator Todd and two-time tournament medalist Joseph Sykora who finished 2nd at the 2008 SEC Championships.

In what would be considered something of a rebuilding year, Seawell and the Tide are getting respect.

In the Golf World pre-season Coaches' Poll, Alabama ehecked in at number eight. Defending NCAA champion UCLA, with all five starters returning from last year's team, was pre-season number one.

Among SEC teams, Georgia was ranked third and Florida seventh.

Golfweek was not as impressed. Its 2008-09 pre-season Top 30 men's team rankings put Bama at number 20. Golfweek has Georgia as its pre-season number one.

Returning for Alabama is All-SEC golfer Matthew Swan who made his fourth U.S. Amateur appearance last week. He is a senior. Also returning is senior Matt Hughes who was voted all-district last season and played on Alabama's SEC championship winning team as well as its NCAA postseason teams.

Swan and true freshman Bud Cauley have both been named to Golf World's Coaches' "Top 50 Male Players to Watch" list. Cauley was the co-medalist earlier this summer at the Toyota Junior World Championships in Japan. He was playing for the USA's team which finished fifth. The Jacksonville, Fla., native also played in the U.S. Amateur, making his second career appearance before he'd even entered college.

Keeping An Eye On Women

The Alabama women's golf team of Coach Mic Potter and senior Kathleen Ekey were recognized by Golf World in its preseason College Coaches' Polls and its list of the Top 50 female "Players to Watch."

"It is a coaches poll so the coaches have looked to see what teams have coming back and what they have lost," Potter said. "I am honored to be in the top 10. Some coaches feel we got better and I think we did. But I do take it with a grain of salt because we need to improve on the golf course."

The Crimson Tide checked in at number 10 in the pre-season poll. Defending champion Southern California is number one.

Golf Week also picked Alabama number 10 in its pre-season poll. Golf Week had UCLA as its pre-season champion.

Alabama is coming off a 12th place finish at the NCAA Championship and brings back all its talent except graduated senior Sarah Sturm. The 12th-place finish is the second-best finish for the Crimson Tide in school history at an NCAA Championship. Alabama has improved its finish every season at the NCAA Championship under Potter.

On its list of top 50 women players to watch, Golf World included Crimson Tide All-America Ekey. The Wadsworth, Ohio, native finished the year with a school record scoring average of 73.3. She also holds the single round Bama record, a 65 in the Crimson Tide Classic. Golf Week named Ekey as the Crimson Tide's "go to" player. ■

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